The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin Faculty of Social Sciences Institute of Psychology

Psychology

Kamil Tomaka 138491

Sanctification of the Romantic Relationship and its Quality in a Sample of Polish Heterosexual Couples in the Perspective of Mahoney's Relational Spirituality Framework

The doctoral dissertation was written under the supervision of S. dr. hab. Beata Zarzycka, prof. KUL and Professor Annette Mahoney

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Abstract in English

This cross-sectional and longitudinal research examined whether and how the sanctification of a romantic relationship was associated with its quality from the perspective of Mahoney's Relational Spirituality Framework in a sample of Polish heterosexual couples. The quality of a romantic relationship was expressed in intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions as romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment, respectively. The mechanisms of these associations were also analyzed by including the satisfaction with sacrifice as a mediator. The study involved Polish heterosexual married, cohabiting, and engaged couples who completed the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale, the Relationship Assessment Scale, the Commitment Level Subscale, and the Satisfaction with Sacrifice Scale three times in three three-month intervals (Time 1, 2, and 3). The analyses testing the direct hypotheses in the Actor-Partner Interdependence Models (APIM) and indirect ones in the Actor-Partner Interdependence Extended Mediation Models (APIMeM) were conducted in the cross-sectional approach on a total sample of 405 couples at the beginning of the study (in Time 1), next, on the same sample but decreased to 187 couples after three months (in Time 2; retention rate = 46.17%) and 114 couples after six months (in Time 3; retention rate = 28.15%). The same hypotheses were also tested in the APIM and APIMeM models in a longitudinal approach on 98 couples who completed the questionnaires three times (in Time 1, 2, and 3; retention rate = 24.20%). The findings revealed that women's and men's perceptions of their romantic unions as sacred are linked to their own and their partner's greater relationship satisfaction and commitment in the "here and now" and long-term perspective (i.e., cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches, respectively). Satisfaction with sacrifice was a significant mediator of these associations, indicating that men's sacrifice, especially in the longterm approach, is a more important predictor of greater satisfaction and commitment in the relationship for their own and their partners. A man's commitment to a relationship depends significantly on how a woman perceives it, whether or not she sees something special and sacred in it. A psychological interpretation of the obtained effects was presented, and the limitations and practical applicability of the project results were indicated.

Keywords: religiousness, spirituality, relationship satisfaction, commitment, sanctification of a romantic relationship, sacrifice, APIM, APIMeM

Abstract in Polish

Prezentowane przekrojowe i podłużne badania analizowały, czy i w jaki sposób uświęcenie związku romantycznego było związane z jego jakością w perspektywie koncepcji duchowości relacyjnej Mahoney. Badano polskie pary heteroseksualne. Jakość związku romantycznego została zoperacjonalizowana w wymiarze intrapersonalnym i interpersonalnym, odpowiednio jako satysfakcja ze związku i zaangażowanie w relację. Badano także mechanizmy tych zależności poprzez uwzględnienie satysfakcji z poświęcenia się jako mediatora. W badaniu wzięły udział polskie heteroseksualne pary - małżeńskie, żyjące w konkubinacie i narzeczeńskie, które wypełniły Skalę uświęcenia związku romantycznego/małżeństwa, Skalę oceny relacji, podskalę Zaangażowania oraz Skalę satysfakcji z poświęcenia trzykrotnie w trzymiesięcznych odstępach czasowych (czas 1, 2 i 3). Analizy testujące hipotezy bezpośrednie w modelach współzależności aktor-partner (APIM) i pośrednie w rozszerzonych modelach mediacji współzależności aktorpartner (APIMeM) przeprowadzono w podejściu przekrojowym na łącznej próbie 405 par na początku badania (w czasie 1), a następnie na tej samej próbie, ale zmniejszonej do 187 par po trzech miesiącach (w czasie 2; wskaźnik retencji = 46,17%) i 114 par po sześciu miesiącach (w czasie 3; wskaźnik retencji = 28,15%). Te same hipotezy zostały również przetestowane w modelach APIM i APIMeM w podejściu podłużnym na 98 parach, które wypełniły kwestionariusze trzykrotnie (w czasie 1, 2 i 3; wskaźnik retencji = 24,20%). Otrzymane wyniki ujawniły, że postrzeganie przez kobiety i mężczyzn ich romantycznych związków jako "świętych" wiąże się z większą satysfakcją z relacji i zaangażowaniem u nich samych, jak i ich partnerów w perspektywie "tu i teraz" i długoterminowej (tj. odpowiednio w podejściu przekrojowym i podłużnym). Satysfakcja z poświęcenia była istotnym mediatorem tych zależności, wskazując, że poświęcenie mężczyzn, zwłaszcza w podejściu długoterminowym, jest istotniejszym wskaźnikiem większej satysfakcji i zaangażowania w związek dla nich samych i ich partnerek. Zaangażowanie mężczyzny w związek istotnie zależy od tego, jak postrzega go kobieta, czy widzi w nim coś wyjątkowego i "świętego". Przedstawiono także psychologiczną interpretację uzyskanych zależności oraz wskazano ograniczenia i możliwości praktycznego zastosowania wyników projektu.

Słowa kluczowe: religijność, duchowość, satysfakcja ze związku, zaangażowanie, uświęcanie relacji romantycznej, poświęcenie, APIM, APIMeM

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Kate, with thanks for your encouragement, daily motivation, patience, and sacrifices you have made to help me complete this journey.

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Introduction

The sociocultural changes in Poland and the world over the last several decades have been accompanied by a significant increase in the number of divorces, people living in separation, single parents, and an increase in informal relationships (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020; Szukalski, 2020). It can be assumed that a crisis in creating, shaping, and maintaining romantic relationships has occurred or even deepened. Statistical data confirm this. The Central Statistical Office in Poland (CSO, 2022) reported 211.2 thousand marriages in 2000 and 155.8 thousand in 2022. At the same time, the number of divorces increased from 42.8 thousand (in 2000) to 60.2 thousand (in 2022). The Public Opinion Research Center (PORC, 2019) reported that since 2009, there has been a steady decline in the number of people in Poland who support traditional marriage as the primary form of life. At the same time, there is an increase in the number of people considering cohabitation an equally attractive form of living together. These trends are reinforced by data on the growing percentage of Polish children born out of wedlock, from 20.1% in 2009 to 26.4% in 2020 (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020). Trends visible in Poland correspond to those observed in most OECD countries, e.g., Chile, France, Denmark, and Italy (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020). Thus, marriage in its traditional form loses its appeal and seems to be gradually being replaced by alternative ways of living, for example, living alone or cohabiting.

Researchers (e.g., Hawkins et al., 2012; Paprzycka et al., 2020; Parker et al., 2022), on the one hand, look for the causes of this phenomenon and point to ideological, economic, or cultural factors. For instance, Hawkins et al. (2012) showed that the most common causes of divorce are, e.g., growing apart, infidelity, and sexual, financial, or alcohol problems. On the other hand, they search for factors supporting romantic relationships. Polish (e.g., Krok, 2018; Sorokowski et al., 2019) and foreign researchers (e.g., Givertz et al., 2019; He et al., 2018; Mahoney, 2010, 2013) have provided numerous data on factors that play a predictive role in shaping romantic relationship, including coping with stress (Givertz et al., 2019), the situation of relationship breakdown (Mahoney, 2013), as well as conditioning the quality and durability of the relationship (Dew et al., 2020). In recent years, researchers' interest in religiousness and spirituality variables in research on romantic unions has increased.

In 2010, Annette Mahoney searched the PsycINFO and SocINDEX databases and found only 131 studies published from 1999 to 2009 focused on describing the linkages between religious, spiritual, and romantic relationship variables, not merely including religious/spiritual variables as control variables in complex models with little to no discussion of the linkages. The scarcity of empirical studies focused on the intersection of faith and marriage, it was quite a surprising finding, especially since 92% of Americans say they believe in God or a Higher Power, and 65% say they pray daily or attend church services (Pew Research, 2017). Currently, the number of such studies has increased significantly. A search of the PsycINFO and APA Psych Articles databases revealed that between 2010 and 2024 (August), 177 articles, 86 scientific dissertations, and 23 books exploring and analyzing the role of religiosity/spirituality in romantic relationships/marriages were produced. In this context, researchers (e.g., Dew et al., 2020; King et al., 2022; Sabey et al., 2014) have focused on the psychological process of sanctification of romantic relationships contained in the Relational Spirituality Framework (Mahoney, 2010, 2013).

The Relational Spirituality Framework (RSF) was developed by Annette Mahoney of Bowling Green State University (Ohio, USA) in 2010 to organize various ways that religious/spiritual involvement can be associated with different marital/relationship outcomes. She identified three mechanisms through which religion/spirituality may influence the romantic union across the life span: (1) the partner's connection to the divine (i.e., God or Higher Power), (2) the perception of the romantic relationship as having spiritual/religious properties (i.e., the psychospiritual process of sanctification of romantic relationship that indicates to what extent partners think their romantic relationship is a manifestation of God/High Power and/or is marked by sacred qualities), and (3) partners connection to the religious/spiritual community. These mechanisms can operate at any stage of a romantic relationship, including its discovery, maintenance, and transformation.

Previous research carried out in the context of RSF confirmed the links of these religious/spiritual mechanisms with higher marital satisfaction, commitment, sexual fidelity, pro-relationship behaviors (King et al., 2022), mutual support within the couple (Fincham et al., 2010; Lambert & Dollahite, 2010), solving conflicts, the willingness to forgive (Lambert & Dollahite, 2006), and lower risk of divorce (Li et al., 2018). Studies have also indicated that individuals in different-sex (Mahoney et al., 1999), same-sex (Phillips et al., 2017), and cohabiting unions (Henderson et al., 2018) who sanctified their relationship were more committed to it, indicating greater emotional intimacy with their partner and greater satisfaction.

Polish scholars have also paid much attention to individual religiosity (which may be perceived as the first mechanism of the RSF) and its role in shaping relationships, including romantic unions (see Anczyk, 2021). For example, Braun-Gałkowska (1985) found that partners with positive religious attitudes were characterized by more vital marital satisfaction and a sense of success and happiness. Krok (2012) showed that more frequent church attendance and the personal relevance of religion relate to greater marital satisfaction. Janicka and Kunikowska (2021) noted that the partners' religious homogamy was associated with more relationship

commitment. Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al. (2024) showed that individuals (being in married and cohabiting relationships) with a firmer belief that God exists and a more literal belief in Catholic teachings were more likely to view their intimate partnership as sanctified, which, next, was associated with greater relational commitment and a lower risk of union dissolution.

However, many studies conducted on religious/spiritual and romantic unions often have included only global religious/spiritual factors (such as religious attendance or meaning) rather than specific ones (Mahoney et al., 2023). Specific religious/spiritual variables, such as the sanctification of romantic relationships, could give us a more detailed and complex view of the role of the partners' religious beliefs in marital and family life. There are also not many studies, especially in Polish psychological research (I have found only two; see Wendołowska and Czyżowska, 2021 and Czyżowska et al., 2024), that analyze associations between religiousness and various relationship outcomes that include the perspective of both partners (e.g., Dew et al., 2020). In addition, whereas significant cross-sectional links exist between global indicators of religiousness and marital quality or stability (e.g., Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Latifa & Amelia, 2018; Latifa et al., 2021), longitudinal studies are scarce and have often yielded inconsistent or null findings (e.g., Cutrona et al. 2011; Brown et al., 2008; Sullivan, 2001).

Considering the above limitations, I decided to conduct a study that fills these gaps and provides new knowledge about the role of specific religious factors in romantic relationship life. Thus, I designed the research, which includes specific religious/spiritual factors, such as the psychospiritual process of sanctification of a romantic relationship (Mahoney, 2013), which so far was analyzed in the Polish socio-cultural context only in one study (Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024), analyze the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship and its quality in a Polish sample of couples (dyad research), search of possibility mechanism of these associations and test these linkages using cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

Therefore, my project has four aims. First, it examines the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship and its quality in Polish couples. The quality of the romantic relationship will be operationalized as satisfaction with the romantic relationship (intrapersonal level) and commitment to the relationship (interpersonal level). These dimensions are among the most critical aspects of romantic life (Mahoney, 2010; Reynolds et al., 2014). Second, it analyzes the potential mechanism of these associations and includes the satisfaction with sacrifice as a possible mediator. Third, the analysis will be conducted in the Actor-Partner Interdependence Models (APIM; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) and the Actor-Partner Interdependence Models Extended to Mediation (APIMeM; Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) using cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches, and data from both

partners. Finally, it shows how different sociodemographics (such as age, education, and gender) are related to the perception by partners of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in their romantic relationships.

The presented doctoral dissertation consists of five chapters: (1) Theoretical Background, (2) The Present Study, (3) Method, (4) Results, and (5) Discussion. The first section describes the study's theoretical background, especially the Relational Spirituality Framework, and studied variables (sanctification of romantic relationship, relationship satisfaction and commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice). The second section emphasizes the study's significance and details the research's purpose (e.g., researchers' questions, aims, models, and hypotheses). The third section gives an overview of the study's method. The fourth section details the research results. Finally, the fifth section summarizes the obtained results and discusses them in light of the literature.

Chapter I Theoretical Background

This chapter presents the theoretical basis for the research conducted. It consists of four paragraphs explaining the variables studied. The first paragraph describes the integrative paradigm of religiousness/spirituality and Mahoney's (2013) Relational Spirituality Framework. The second paragraph shows the process of sanctification of a romantic relationship. The third paragraph presents the issue of the quality of the romantic relationship, focusing on relationship satisfaction and commitment. Finally, the fourth paragraph explains the phenomenon of sacrifice in a romantic relationship.

1.1 Religiousness and Spirituality in the Psychology of Religion

Religiousness and spirituality are essential aspects of life for many people (Mahoney et al., 2003; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). We can find religiousness and spirituality in many dimensions of life, such as work, music, art, culture, school, family, marriage, and romantic relationships. In addition, theoretical and empirical studies underline that religiousness and spirituality are complex phenomena consisting of a multitude of thoughts, feelings, actions, experiences, relationships, and physiological responses that serve numerous purposes and yield a range of consequences (e.g., Glock, 1962; Idler et al., 2003; Pargament et al., 2013; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). For this reason, trying to clearly define these terms and determine their interrelationships causes many difficulties.

Psychologists have defined religiousness and spirituality in various terms over the past century (Jarosz, 2010; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). For example, James (1902, p. 32) defined religiousness as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand about whatever they may consider divine." Clark (1958, p. 20) defined it as "the inner experience of the individual when he senses a Beyond, especially as evidenced by the effect of this experience on his behavior when actively attempts to harmonize his life with the Beyond," and Peteet (1994) as "commitments to beliefs and practices characteristic of particular traditions." Doyle (1992, p. 20) defined spirituality as "the search for existential meaning," and Hart (1994, p. 23) as "the way one lives out one's faith in daily life, the way a person relates to the ultimate conditions of existence," and Armstrong (1995, p. 3, as cited in Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005) as "the presence of a relationship with a High Power that affects the way which one operates in the world." It is also worth pointing out that there has been general agreement that both constructs are multidimensional (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005).

For much of the 20th century, religiousness has been seen as a broad, multifaceted domain that encompassed both individual and institutional levels of analysis, both constructive and destructive expressions, both traditional and newer forms, both structure and function, and both intrinsic and extrinsic forms of motivation (Jarosz, 2010). In the latter part of the century, under an increase in individualized forms of faith expression, movement from an emphasis on belief toward a direct experience of the sacred, and socio-cultural changes, the term spirituality was introduced and began to appropriate some of the meanings of religiousness (Hill et al., 2000; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005).

In theoretical explanation and studies, striking contrasts began to appear between the two concepts: religiousness as an institution versus spirituality as an individual, religiousness as external and objective versus spirituality as internal and subjective, religiousness as old versus spirituality as new, religiousness as structural versus spirituality as functional, religiousness as fixed and frozen versus spirituality as flexible and dynamic, and even religiousness as bad versus spirituality as good (Jarosz, 2010; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005; Wulf, 1997). Moreover, spirituality more often began to connote an individualized, experience-based pursuit of positive values such as connection, meaning, self-realization, and authenticity. People who identify themselves as "spiritual but not religious" have also emerged.

In the 21st century, Zinnbauer and Pargament (2005) emphasized that the polarization between religiousness and spirituality is not precise. These confrontational and competing views of religiousness and spirituality arose in a culture emphasizing individualism. This occurred when traditional cultural authorities and norms were rejected and challenged. However, according to these researchers, even more interesting is that despite the pervasive criticism of religiousness, spiritual groups and organizations have gained more and more popularity. People who abandon traditional religiosity in favor of spiritual commitment often form new spiritual organizations, which, as Zinnbauer and Pargament (2005) pointed out, differ from traditional religions only in that they are new and have their own beliefs.

In the context of these changes, the question arises: How do we define religiousness and spirituality? These problematic points also raise methodological and practical problems for researchers and practicing psychologists. The terms religiousness and spirituality have appeared in many theories that emphasized either religiousness, e.g., Allport's (1950) intrinsic and extrinsic religiousness, Jaworski's (1998) personal religiousness, Kirkpatrick and Shaver's (1997) religious attachment, or spirituality, e.g., Piedmont's (1999) spiritual transcendence, Paloutzian, and Ellison's (1982) spiritual well-being. Both terms were sometimes used together or interchangeably, such as in Exline's (2013) religious and spiritual struggles theory. These

differences contribute to researchers' search for a possible integrative theory that would more comprehensively describe religiousness and spirituality and determine their mutual relationship and impact on human life.

1.1.1 The Integrative Paradigm for the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality

Pargament et al. (2013) proposed an integrated theory claiming that religion and spirituality are multidimensional constructs and multilevel phenomena consisting of many thoughts, feelings, actions, experiences, relationships, and psychological responses. They defined spirituality as "the search for the sacred" (Pargament et al., 2013, p. 14). This definition consists of two essential terms: *search* and *sacred*. The term *sacred* is used inclusively to refer not only to concepts of God and higher powers but also to other aspects of life that are perceived to be manifestations of the divine or imbued with divinelike qualities, such as transcendence, immanence, boundlessness, and ultimacy (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). The heart of the sacred can extend to romantic relationships as well as other domains of life (e.g., career, community work, nature), with individuals differing in the constellation of elements that encompass the entire sphere of the sacred (Mahoney, 2013; Pargament, 2007; Pargament et al., 2013). The *search* process includes three dynamic and recursive stages of discovering, maintaining, and transforming the sacred across peoples' lives (Pargament et al., 2013). Pargament et al. (2013) used a journey metaphor to understand this term better.

The journey begins with the discovery of something sacred. This stage can be experienced as a personal achievement (the individual succeeds in finding the sacred) or as a revelation (the sacred reveals itself to the individual; Pargament, 2007). In either case, however, the search for the sacred does not end there. In response to discovering the sacred, the task shifts to building and maintaining a relationship with it. Sometimes, especially during stress and various difficulties, the search process also involves transforming the individual's relationship with the sacred (Pargament, 1997). After the transformation, the task moves to build and sustain a reconnection with the sacred as it is now understood and experienced. Furthermore, the journey, the search for the sacred, continues.

In addition, Pargament et al. (2013) emphasize that everyone can have a different spiritual and religious journey. Some prefer to follow their paths, while others choose the ready-made paths of their religion. Notably, virtually every major religious tradition talks about life as a journey and gives its believers a map of the paths they should follow. For example, Christians follow the path found in Scripture and Muslims in the Quran. Sometimes, however, people can go outside any religious tradition. People can search for the sacred within any context, traditional or

nontraditional. In other words, they can follow well-trodden pathways established by conventional institutions or construct distinctive paths with little to do with established religions (Pargament et al., 2013). What matters is that all these pathways contain these three fundamental stages: discovery, maintenance, and transformation, which are related to searching the sacrum. Spirituality does not specify a particular context in which the stages unfold.

In the traditional path context, Pargament et al. (2013, p. 15) define religion as "the search for significance that occurs within the context of established institutions that are designed to facilitate spirituality." In this case, religion occurs in the broader context of established institutions and traditions whose primary purpose is to facilitate the development of spirituality. Spirituality, in turn, is the most central function of institutional religious life. The spiritual nature of its mission distinguishes religious institutions; no other social institution has spirituality as its primary goal (Mahoney, 2010). To this end, religious institutions encourage their members to follow life paths embedded with a sacred character, such as engaging in religious rituals, attending services, and studying sacred literature (Pargament et al., 2013).

Pargament et al. (2013) noted that religiosity and spirituality could have constructive or destructive functions and be a resource or a source of stress. On the one hand, it can help people solve their problems, increase well-being, and be a source of support, and on the other hand, it can produce tension, anxiety, and depressive symptoms.

1.1.2 Similarities and Dissimilarities Between Religiousness and Spirituality

Pargament et al. (2013) underline that religiousness and spirituality are similar in five aspects. First, the sacred is a central element both in religiousness and spirituality. Pargament (1997, 2007) broadly defined the sacred and thus opened the doors of the psychology of religion and spirituality to a wide range of traditional and non-traditional phenomena. Second, both terms are dynamic searching processes, including three stages: discovery, maintenance, and transformation. Third, both religiousness and spirituality are multidimensional and multilevel processes. People can take from various beliefs, practices, experiences, and relationships in their spiritual and religious journeys. They can follow these paths alone or with other people. For this reason, religiousness and spirituality can be understood at the individual, dyadic, familial, organizational, social, and cultural levels of analysis. Fourth, both terms are multivalent, indicating they can lead to constructive and destructive outcomes. Fifth, both spirituality and religion are important matters. Spirituality is directed toward sacred goals. Religiousness is directed toward meaningful aims that may be sacred. When religiousness focuses on the sacred, it becomes indistinguishable from spirituality.

In contrast, religiousness and spirituality differ on two key dimensions: function and context (Pargament et al., 2013). Function refers to the goals or relevant objectives related to spirituality and religiousness. Context refers to the larger social environment in which these constructs develop. Regarding function, religiousness aims to achieve a broader range of aims or meaningful objectives than spirituality. Religiousness is essential in facilitating spirituality and serves other psychological, social, and physical functions. Spirituality focuses on searching for a meaningful, sacred goal. Spirituality is not limited to an individual's relationship with the sacred, traditionally understood as God or a Higher Power. Seemingly secular functions, e.g., psychological, social, and physical, can also have sacred status.

In terms of context, religiousness is more limited than spirituality. Religiousness is embedded in an established institutional context. Pargament et al. (2013) emphasize that longestablished organizations and institutions aim to facilitate believers' connection to the sacred. Spirituality, therefore, can be an essential part of traditional religious life and embedded in nontraditional contexts.

1.1.3 Theoretical Foundations of the Presented Doctoral Dissertation

Nowadays, the integrative paradigm for the psychology of religion and spirituality has become more and more popular. For many researchers (Emmos & Paloutzian, 2003; Hill et al., 2003; Pargament et al., 2013; Mahoney, 2013; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005) religiousness and spirituality are cultural "facts" not reducible to other processes or phenomena, most people define themselves as religiousness and spiritual, religiousness and spirituality are multidimensional, complex constructs, and religiousness and spirituality can develop and change over time for individuals and groups.

In this doctoral dissertation, I adopted the integrative theory of the psychology of religion and spirituality proposed by Pargament et al. (2013) and described in the APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality: Vol. 1. Context, Theory, and Research in Chapter 1. As I mentioned earlier, in this approach (Pargament et al., 2013), spirituality is defined as "the search for the sacred" (p. 14), religion as "the search for significance that occurs within the context of established institutions that are designed to facilitate spirituality" (p. 15), and "religiousness which refers to a search for significance in ways related to sacred" (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005, p. 36).

Pargament et al. (2013) recommended "using the language of both religiousness and spirituality when referring to (a) the search for the full range of significant destinations, sacred and secular, and (b) beliefs, practices, experiences, or relationships that are embedded within both

nontraditional, secular contexts and established institutional contexts designed to facilitate the sacred search" (p. 17). The Relational Spirituality Framework proposed by Mahoney (2010, 2013), which is based on this well-grounded paradigm and is fundamental to this doctoral dissertation, describes the psycho-spiritual process of sanctification. Sanctification refers to how people impart a divine character or meaning to a given object. The process may occur in traditional and nontraditional contexts (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). Including the above reasons, both terms (religiousness and spirituality) will be treated in this doctoral dissertation as similar constructs and designated by the abbreviation r/s throughout the text.

1.2 Religiousness and Spirituality in Romantic Relationships

For many people, r/s can provide life goals, help build social relationships, and be a source of support in difficult situations (Park, 2013). Previous research has indicated that r/s is important in various areas of people's lives, e.g., work (Griebel et al., 2014), politics (Aronoff, 2021), family, and romantic relationships (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2023). At different stages of developing a romantic relationship, r/s can play an important role. It can influence the marriage decision, long-term commitment, actions to strengthen and enrich romantic relationships, and effective coping strategies during crises (Mahoney, 2013). R/S can also play a role when the life cycle of a relationship and family goes through transitions and couples typically experience crises. One such situation is pregnancy and parenthood, when partners often experience conflict and negativity in the relationship, feel increasingly dissatisfied, and are at risk of relationship breakdown. Partners' religious beliefs, such as the belief that parenting is sacred, can help them overcome difficult times in the relationship (Fellers et al., 2023; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013).

1.2.1 Psychological Approaches of the Role of R/S in Romantic Relationships

Researchers have offered various theories to explain the association between r/s and romantic relationships. For example, Sullivan (2001) theorized that there are three general models for how r/s may influence romantic relationship outcomes. First, in the direct model, r/s directly affects romantic satisfaction. Second, in the indirect model, r/s affects romantic satisfaction indirectly through other variables, such as commitment in the relationship (Dew et al., 2020). Finally, in the compensation model, r/s moderates the association between vulnerability factors and romantic satisfaction. Lakatos and Martos (2019), in their review study, highlighted the three particular beneficial theoretical approaches to describe the links between r/s and romantic relationships - the attachment to God theory (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990; Maxwell et al., 2018),

religious experience theory (Marks & Dollahite, 2017), and the relational spirituality framework (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013).

1.2.1.1 Romantic Relationship and Attachment to God

Attachment theory is one of the most popular approaches to explaining various individual and relationship outcomes. Cassidy and Shaver (1999/2008) presented and described this theory in detail in *The Handbook of Attachment*.

The theory's roots are found in Bowlby (1969), who first proposed attachment theory as an evolutionary behavioral system that protects infants from predators. Bowlby (1980) went on to state that attachment dynamics are experienced through emotions, and the formation of an emotional bond has been described as "falling in love" (p. 40). Grief and sadness are experienced when there is a loss of an attachment figure, a person with whom infants form an emotional bond. Such a figure is usually the mother or primary caregiver. Bowlby (1973) described predictive behaviors that develop from attachment's internal working models (IWMs), characterizing the attachment bond as secure or insecure. These behaviors form predictable patterns or styles of attachment (Ainsworth, 1991), which emerge from repeated experiences with the attachment figure (its availability or lack thereof). The IWMs then become procedural scripts (Johnson, 2004) for relating to each other based on previous attachment relationships. These scripts are considered relatively stable but prone to change with experience (Ainsworth, 1991; Crittenden, 2008; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The theoretical consideration and empirical studies (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Benoit, 2004; Cassidy & Shaver, 1999/2008; Thompson et al., 2022) allow delineated three main attachment styles, often called secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant.

The IWMs in attachment theory (Bowlby, 1973), which is based primarily on attachment experiences in childhood and adolescence, continue to exert influence in contexts that activate the attachment system in adulthood, mainly in romantic relationships (Hazan & Zeifman, 1994). Hazan and Shaver (1987) pointed out that the above categories of childhood attachment styles (secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant) can also be used to categorize and analyze romantic relationships. However, it is worth noting that they may be slightly different because attachment in a romantic relationship is a two-way process that requires mutual concern (Zeifman & Hazan, 2008).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), based on Bowlby's (1973) working models, which included images of self and others, developed a model of adult attachment. This model emphasizes that responses to the unavailability of the loved person may be organized along two dimensions. The first is the model of self (self-image in attachment situations), and the second is the model of

others (expectations, emotions, and perceptions). In addition, a person's abstract self-image can be dichotomized as positive or negative (self as worthy of love and support or not), and the abstract image of others can also be dichotomized as positive or negative (other people are seen as trustworthy and available vs. unreliable and rejecting). This combination yields four attachment patterns: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Figure 1).

Furthermore, the two dimensions (model of self and model of other) correlate well with anxious and avoidant behaviors in attachment situations. While the negative model of self is characterized by anxiety, the negative model of others is described by a greater tendency toward avoidance. The positive model of self and a positive model of others implies secure attachment and adaptive readiness (Onishi et al., 2001).

Figure 1

Model of adult attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991, p. 227)



Research has shown that an adult's attachment style affects motivation and, thus, the development of close relationships and how committed a person is to a close relationship (Collins & Feeney, 2004; Morgan & Shaver, 1999). For example, in the longitudinal study, Simpson (1990) showed the impact of secure, anxious, and avoidant attachment styles on romantic relationships. Results indicated that the secure attachment style was associated with greater relationship interdependence, commitment, trust, and satisfaction for men and women. On the other hand, the anxious and avoidant styles were associated with less frequent positive emotions and more frequent negative emotions in the relationship. Li and Chan (2012), in a meta-analytic study, confirmed that anxiety and avoidance attachment were detrimental to relationship quality's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects. In addition, attachment styles (anxious and avoidant) have been shown to influence relationship commitment strongly, measured in the Investment

Model (Rusbult, 1980; Le & Agnew, 2003) as satisfaction, alternative, and investment in the relationship (Etcheverry et al., 2013).

Attachment theory has also proved crucial in the psychology of religion and spirituality. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1990) indicated that attachment in early childhood could influence an individual's relationship with God and religious beliefs. For religious people, God can be a substitutive attachment figure that provides shelter in difficult situations and offers a solid foundation for learning about and experiencing life. An insecure mother-child attachment can be compensated in adulthood with a personal, loving, and accepting God. In severe stress, crisis, or after a traumatic experience, an adult with an avoidant or ambivalent childlike attachment style can go through a dramatic conversion and build a trusting relationship with God. However, such individuals also tend to form an ambivalent attachment to God. They feel this attachment more strongly when they need protection and help but less intensely when life is characterized by well-being (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2013).

Kirkpatrick (1999) specified attachment to God in four aspects: (1) God as a haven of safety, (2) God as a secure base for exploration, (3) seeking and maintaining proximity to God, and (4) responses to separation and loss. It is also worth pointing out that although attachment to God can be manifested through these four aspects, it does not necessarily mean that it comprises four distinct dimensions. Attachment is often seen as a unitary rather than a multidimensional construct (Kirkpatrick, 1999).

Studies (e.g., Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Pollard et al., 2014; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002) show links between patterns of attachment to God and various aspects of people's lives, especially psychological well-being, coping, and romantic relationships. For instance, Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) indicated that securely attached individuals to God had greater life satisfaction and lower levels of anxiety and depression than those with an avoidant attachment to God. Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002) showed that anxious attachment to God was positively related to neuroticism and negative emotions. Pollard et al. (2014), in a sample of 81 heterosexual couples, found that positive religious coping buffered the deleterious relationship between attachment avoidance and marital adjustment. In addition, positive religious coping was associated with higher marital adjustment only for those individuals with low attachment anxiety. Moreover, religious commitment (i.e., belonging to a congregation and actively practicing the religion) reduced the negative impact of avoidant attachment on relationship satisfaction (Lopez et al., 2011).

According to the attachment theory, a person's relationship goals, beliefs, and attachment strategies are organized into IWMs (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999/2008). In religious individuals, their behaviors, emotions, and ideas related to God can also be organized into IWMs. If a bond with

God provides an individual with security, this security can extend to relational processes (Lakatos & Martos, 2019).

Maxwell et al. (2018) went to the next step in attachment theoretical consideration and proposed a new working model for relationships – the Model of Covenant Attachment (Figure 2). It includes shared working models (SWMs), encompassing the couple's behaviors, feelings, and ideas about God and their marriage. Like the individual's attachment process, where the working model incorporates ideas about the self and the other, SWMs integrate concepts about the relationship and God. Couples characterized by secure attachment to God will believe that God will help them maintain and protect their relationship. Additionally, they may be accompanied by the belief that their relationship is precious and sacred and should be protected and cared for. This, in turn, will generate individual and shared behaviors, emotions, and thoughts that will further strengthen the couple's relationship with each other and with God. Maxwell et al. (2018) also noted that one of the subcategories in this model (God in relation to relationship events) is constructing God's view of the romantic union by attributing positive behaviors that God undertakes toward the relationship and is similar to Pargament and Mahoney's (2005) process of sanctification.

Figure 2

Model of Covenant Attachment (Maxwell et al., 2018, p. 8)



In summary, attachment theory, especially attachment to God, is an emerging model explaining the role of r/s variables in the perception and formation of romantic relationships.

However, this theory focuses on only one dimension of r/s: attachment to God. The next theory proposed by Marks and Dollahite (2017) considers r/s more widely. It includes three areas of r/s: beliefs, practices, and community.

1.2.1.2 Romantic Relationship and Ways of Experiencing God

Marks and Dollahite (2017), based on in-depth interviews with 200 families and nearly 500 individuals (i.e., mothers, fathers, and children) representing various denominations, such as Catholic, Conservative Protestant, Mainline Protestant, New Christian Religious Traditions, Islam, and Judaism, proposed a model (Figure 3), which describes the connections between three dimensions of religiosity (religious beliefs, practices, and communities) and three different types of relationships within families (mother-child, father-child, and marital relationships).

Figure 3

The model presents the connections between Religious Beliefs, Practices, and Communities and Mother-Child, Father-Child, and Marital Relationships (Marks & Dollahite, 2017, p. 32)



As shown in Figure 3, the model includes three dimensions of religiosity: (1) beliefs, (2) practices, and (3) community. The first relates to personal belief, frame of interpretation, and meaning. The second refers to visible or hidden behaviors and actions, such as prayer, the study of sacred texts, the rituals, and the traditions embedded in a particular religion. The third includes social support, participation, and community involvement. The model also presents the individuals (M = Mother, F = Father, C = Child) as part of an intact nuclear family, and arrows show connections between them and three types of religion (Marks & Dollahite, 2017).

Religion practices and religious beliefs are connected by arrow A. It is often the case that religious beliefs influence religious practices (sacred activities) and abstinence (avoidance of certain activities). Because of their religious beliefs, some religious individuals abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. Arrow B links religious beliefs and religious community. The sacred religious beliefs a person or couple holds can significantly impact which congregation a person or couple engages in or whether they engage in a faith community. Arrow C represents the relationship between religious community and practices. In most world religions, specific religious practices are promoted by religious communities. Examples of such practices may be the Catholic Holy Mass, the Islamic call to prayer, or the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur (Marks & Dollahite, 2017).

The model also includes specific arrows labeled 1A (religious practices and marriage relationships), 2A (religious beliefs and marriage), 3A (faith community and marriage), 1B (religious practices and the mother-child relationship), 2B (religious beliefs and the mother-child relationship), 3B (religious community and the mother-child relationship), 1C (religious practices and the father-child relationship), 2C (religious beliefs and the father-child relationship), and 3C (religious community and the father-child relationship).

Marks and Dollahite (2017) believe that their model, while not perfect, is relatively simple and straightforward. It can help better understand the role and meaning of religiosity in family relationships by showing both sides of religiosity: positive and negative. It can also help organize religious aspects, particularly religious practices, beliefs, and religious community, in family life. Below, I will discuss in a little more detail the possible links between these three dimensions of religion and romantic/marital relationships.

1.2.1.2.1 Religious Practices and the Romantic Relationship

Arrow 1A links the religious practices and the marital relationship. Religious practices can provide opportunities to strengthen intimacy, cohesion, and commitment among family members, including spouses (Marks, 2004). Institutional forms of religiosity typically include sermons, religious service, religious celebrations, rites of passage, pilgrimages, praying together, studying sacred texts, and singing (Marks & Dollahite, 2012). Research on Jewish families indicated that rituals concentrated around celebrating the Sabbath (i.e., lighting the candles, the Shabbat meal, and sacred prayers and blessings) strengthened family relationships. (Marks, 2006). Family religious rituals such as prayers before meals strengthen marital closeness and satisfaction and bring family members closer to each other and God (Dollahite & Marks, 2009; Fiese &Tomcho, 2001). The impact of religious rituals on marriage can be positive (improving physical and

psychological well-being, enhancing the quality of life, and strengthening marital ties) and negative, providing religious struggles, e.g., during the funeral of a loved one (Marks & Dollahite, 2012).

1.2.1.2.2 Religious Beliefs and the Romantic Relationship

Arrow 2A links the dimension of religious beliefs with the marital relationship. Religious beliefs can influence the way partners think about their relationships. For example, couples with strong religious beliefs may perceive their marriage/relationship as part of a divine plan and experience God's active presence in it (Goodman & Dollahite, 2006). They may also emphasize that their relationship requires sacrifice and a lifelong commitment (Dollahite et al., 2012). In the study by Lu et al. (2011, p. 136), Shen, a Chinese convert to Christianity, reflected on how his belief in and commitment to God had influenced his marriage to his wife: "Marriage between a couple is a commitment—both to God and to each other. It is a life-long commitment that cannot be changed. Love, mutual respect, patience, and forgiveness are important ingredients of marriage. I cannot give you specific examples of how these virtues have influenced our marriage; however, I can say that all these together have [had] great influence on our 42 years of marriage." In addition, Guo, a mother of four from Hong Kong who has been married for over 20 years, noticed: "God created marriage, and let no man separate. Commitment to marriage is God's blessing; commitment is significant. We [do] not think about divorce, no matter how big the difficulties are. We must work out and resolve the difficulties in the Lord. We would not address divorce easily. This idea cannot emerge into my mind" (Lu et al., 2011, p. 136). Quantitative studies have also shown that religious beliefs increased marital satisfaction, duration, and marital fidelity (Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; Marks et al., 2011; Thomas & Cornwall, 1990). Divergent beliefs and values related to marriage and relationship roles can cause deep and often unresolvable conflicts (Dollahite et al., 2018). Religious beliefs can be factors that can both support and destroy a marriage and family.

1.2.1.2.3 Religious Community and the Romantic Relationship

Arrow 3A links the religious community and the marital relationship. For religious couples, an important aspect of their relationship is the opportunity to become an integral part of a particular religious community. This is usually done by taking wedding vows in the presence of a particular congregation (Dollahite & Marks, 2009). Congregational membership is associated with a sense of belonging to a more prominent family and can play a supportive, sustaining role during crises and difficult times (Brown et al., 2011). Burdette et al. (2007) showed that partners who belong to

a religious community and regularly participate in social events (such as liturgical events) are less likely to have extramarital affairs than those who do not belong to such a community. Koenig et al. (2001), in their review, indicated that 79 of the 100 studies "have a positive correlation between religious involvement and greater happiness, life satisfaction, morale, or positive affect" (p. 101).

Religious institutions, including the Roman Catholic Church, have made special efforts to offer marriage preparation courses for engaged couples (Lakatos, 2014, as cited in Lakatos & Martos, 2019). The goal of these courses is, among other things, to show spouses how to use religion as a resource that can strengthen their marriage and their bond with the religious community (Beach et al., 2011). It is also worth noting that sometimes participation in a religious community can be a source of negative feelings and struggles and lead to the breakup of a relationship, especially when one of the partners decides to leave the religious community (Marks & Dollahite, 2017).

In conclusion, the model proposed by Marks and Dollahite (2017) describes the connections between three dimensions of religiosity (religious beliefs, practices, and community) and three different types of relationships within families (mother-child, father-child, and marital relationships). The model presents more complex ways in which r/s might affect relationships between family members. It also focuses on the positive and negative sides of r/s in family life.

1.2.1.3 Romantic Relationship and the Relational Spirituality

Both above theories center around the relationship between r/s and romantic relationships. The attachment theory (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990; Maxwell et al., 2018) shows the role of attachment, especially to God, in romantic relationships. Marks and Dollahite (2017), in turn, underline reciprocal links between family members (mother, father, and child) and three aspects of r/s (beliefs, practices, and community). The third concept, relational spirituality, focuses on the "religiousness/spirituality of us" and shows how partners/spouses' r/s might be associated with the quality of their relationships. The Relational Spirituality Framework introduced by Mahoney (2013) defined relational spirituality as the interplay of "the search for the sacred" (p. 366) with the search for close relationships, especially when initially creating marriage and family relationships. The framework was designed to provide a heuristic organizational scheme to discuss the myriads of studies on being r/s and the structure and quality of close relationships. In addition to highlighting global r/s factors, the framework delineates how three r/s mechanisms (individual relationships with the religious community) can affect the "discovery, maintenance, and transformation of family relationships" (p. 374).

Most researchers (e.g., Dobrowolska et al., 2020; Fraser et al., 2021; Heaton & Pratt, 1980; Orathinkal & Vansteenwegen, 2006) analyzing the role played by r/s in romantic relationships and family life have primarily focused on individual ("religiousness/spirituality of me") rather than on the relational ("religiousness/spirituality of us") dimension of r/s. However, in colloquial speech, we can often hear such statements as: "*The birth of my child was a miracle,*" "*We took a holy oath,*" or "*We are saved to each other in heaven.*" These phrases indicate the link between r/s and family life and suggest that people think of r/s in a relational way, as the "religiosity/spirituality of us."

Previous research (Scanzoni & Arnett, 1987; Wilson & Filsinger, 1986) has often involved distal religious/spiritual constructs measured as "single, global items such as individuals' frequency of church attendance, homogamy of partner's church affiliation" in marital functioning and life (Mahoney et al., 1999, p. 322). However, individually based measures of r/s do not assess the extent to which couples/partners integrate religion/spirituality into their dyadic activities or perception of their marriage/relationship (Mahoney et al., 2023). Dichotomous indexes of couples' religious/spirituality homogamy reveal little about how much religion/spirituality is integrated into marriage/relationship (Mahoney et al., 1999).

For this reason, in their early study, Mahoney et al. (1999) included two proximal religious or spiritual constructs, defined as religious or spiritual behaviors, activities, or beliefs that measure more "closely or 'proximally' how couples' experience or views of their marriage" (p. 322). The first was joint religious activities, that is, couples' behavior such as praying, discussing personal spiritual issues, or God's role in marriage. The second was the sanctification of romantic relationship/marriage, which is the belief that relationship/marriage is sacred with some spiritual character and significance. They also proposed two different indicators of sanctification: (a) individuals may perceive their relationship/marriage as having sacred qualities, and (b) individuals may experience their relationship/marriage as a manifestation of God.

In their study, Mahoney et al. (1999) analyzed how wives' and husbands' perceptions of the sanctification of relationship/marriage and couples' joint religious behavior would be related to specific, nonreligious aspects. Ninety-seven married couples from a mid-sized metropolitan area participated in the study. The results showed that the proximal religious variables (joint religious activities and sanctification of relationship/marriage) were related to higher marital adjustment, perceived benefits, and verbal collaboration both in men and women. The proximal religious variable was also related to less marital conflict, verbal aggression, and stalemate. The study showed that by "studying proximal aspects of religion, researchers can often understand better

how married couples connect their religious faith to their family life" (Goodman et al., 2013, p. 809).

It is worth noting that this study (Mahoney et al., 1999) changed the perspective on assessing r/s variables in the context of marriage/relationship and family and opened the gate for further research. In the next step, Mahoney et al. (2001) conducted a meta-analytic review and conceptual analysis of the links between religiosity, spirituality, marriage, and parenting, focusing on studies conducted between 1980 and 1999. The findings the authors received were surprising. Researchers' interest in the role of how r/s can shape marital or parent-child relationships was sporadic, although statistics showed that 95% of married couples and parents in the United States reported a religious affiliation, many married American women and men attended church at least once a month (60% and 53%, respectively) and believed that the Bible answers all fundamental human problems (49% and 42%). Furthermore, only 17 of the 94 studies were published by psychologists.

The analysis conducted by Mahoney et al. (2001) indicated that marital functioning, greater individual r/s, and religious homogamy between partners were associated with lower divorce rates, greater marital satisfaction, and more significant commitment to the marital relationship. In addition, greater parental religiousness has been tied to greater satisfaction with parent-child relationships, higher rates of parental affection, more parental consistency, stronger co-parenting alliances, and more cohesive family relations. Based on the results of these analyses, Mahoney et al. (2001) posed two main questions. First, what are the substantive and psychosocial aspects of religion/spirituality in family life? Second, what are the potentially helpful and harmful roles that religion/spirituality can play in family life? These two questions provided the opportunity to pose new research hypotheses and explore the associations between r/s and various romantic relationship outcomes.

1.2.1.3.1 Relational Spirituality Framework

To give profound answers to the above questions, Mahoney (2010) conducted the following literature review, this time focusing on empirical studies on religion and family life published in peer-reviewed journals from 1999 to 2009 and listed in the ISI and PsycINFO databases. The analyses singled out 184 studies, including 137 quantitative and 57 qualitative studies that addressed couples' relationships and dealt with parent–youth and family issues (e.g., divorce). The number of studies analyzing the relationships between faith and family life has increased from 94 indicated in 1980/1990s to 184 observed in 2010. This in-depth analysis of the studies allowed Mahoney (2010) to develop the Relational Spirituality Framework (RFS).

The RFS has two general goals: firstly, to provide perspective on the breadth of religion– family findings from the past decade, and secondly, to help stimulate in-depth questions that have been asked or could be asked about religion's roles in family life. In this conceptual framework, Mahoney (2010) delineates the multifaceted and complex interface of spirituality and family life and highlights three specific psycho-spiritual mechanisms that could facilitate and undermine relationship functioning in both traditional (such as heterosexual couples) and nontraditional families (such as cohabitating heterosexual couples, same-sex couples, and single parents). The Relational Spirituality Framework was previously described by Mahoney in 2010 in the article *Religion in Families, 1999 – 2009: A Relational Spirituality Framework*, and next in more detail in 2013 in the chapter *The Spirituality of Us: Relational Spirituality in the Context of Family Relationships* in APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality: Vol. 1. Context, Theory, and Research. Below, this framework will be presented in more detail.

1.2.1.3.2 Theoretical Background of RSF

The RFS was based on the Integrative Paradigm for the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, detailed in chapter 1.1.1. The approach is based on a well-established and integrated paradigm claiming that religion and spirituality are multidimensional constructs and multilevel phenomena consisting of various thoughts, feelings, actions, experiences, relationships, and psychological responses (Pargament et al., 2013). This paradigm's core concept is spirituality, defined as "the search for the sacred" (Pargament et al., 2013, p. 14). Two terms are essential in this definition: *search* and *sacred*. The term *sacred* is used inclusively to refer not only to concepts of God and higher powers but also to other aspects of life that are perceived to be manifestations of the divine or imbued with divinelike qualities, such as transcendence, immanence, boundlessness, and ultimacy (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). The heart of the sacred can extend to various domains of life (e.g., career, community work, nature) as well as marriage and romantic relationships, with individuals differing in the constellation of elements that encompass the entire sphere of the sacred (Mahoney, 2013; Pargament, 2007; Pargament et al., 2013). The *search* process includes three dynamic and recursive stages of discovering, maintaining, and transforming the sacred across peoples' lives (Pargament et al., 2013).

Mahoney (2010, 2013) adopted this paradigm to marriage/romantic relationships and family life. People may experience romantic unions and family relationships as part of the sacred. Searching for the sacred in these relationships might include discovery, maintenance, and transformation, e.g., when partners decide to get offspring or to take the sacred oath. Partners/spouses may perceive their relationship/marriage (as sacred) within any context,

traditional or nontraditional. Previous studies conducted showed that heterosexual (Mahoney et al., 1999), homosexual (Phillips et al., 2017) relationships, as well as cohabiting couples (Henderson et al., 2018) often perceive their union as sacred.

Spirituality is conceptualized in this approach as a distinctive function of religion, with the latter understood as a search for significance in ways related to the sacred (Pargament, 1997; Pargament & Mahoney, 2002). Besides fostering spirituality, religion also encompasses constructive and destructive functions of religious beliefs, practices, and communal affiliation. The RSF (Mahoney, 2010; 2013) described three stages and mechanisms that may help uncover positive and negative roles of religiousness/spirituality in the health and well-being of family relationships.

1.2.1.3.3 Stages of Romantic Relationships

Building a romantic relationship consists of three stages: discovery, maintenance, and transformation (Mahoney, 2010, 2013). The first stage, discovery, may include union formation (e.g., religion/spirituality may be a relevant factor in seeking a spouse), maternal fertility (e.g., religions may encourage married couples to procreate), or attitudes about family roles of men and women (e.g., religion/spirituality can be important in formatting roles that men and women play across the family life cycle). The second stage, maintenance, may include efforts for spouses to protect their relationship, marital satisfaction, and commitment to relationship or parenting (e.g., parent-adolescent relational satisfaction and closeness). The third stage, transformation, may include coping with domestic violence, post-divorce adjustment, or child abuse.

1.2.1.3.4 Spiritual/Religious Mechanisms

The RSF details three sets of spiritual mechanisms for the substantive integration of religion/spirituality into family relationships and whether it helps or harms them (Mahoney, 2010, 2013). These mechanisms may operate in discovering, maintaining, and transforming family relationships. The search for family relationships can be influenced by (1) individual relationships with the divine/God, (2) perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, and (3) family member's relationships with the religious community (Mahoney, 2010).

The first mechanism, a family member's relationship with God's/Higher Power, is an individual relationship that makes it easier to set goals and methods of conduct, persevere in marriage/relationships, and deal with difficulties. Research showed that married men who attend church services spend more time with their families than those who do not participate in church services (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2010). Praying for a partner is associated with a higher

relationship quality (Dew et al., 2020). The higher religiosity/spirituality of a family member was negatively associated with the risk of divorce, infidelity, and domestic violence (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2023). However, this individual religiosity/spirituality can also be a source of struggles, e.g., married men felt angry with God in the event of an unplanned pregnancy; religious people prayed to God to change their partner's behavior instead of talking to him (Mahoney, 2013).

The second mechanism, the perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, is related to the psychospiritual process of sanctification of the relationship/marriage. Sanctification indicates the extent to which spouses/partners think their relationship/marriage is a manifestation of God (theistic sanctification) and/or is marked by sacred qualities (non-theistic sanctification; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013). Researchers (Henderson et al., 2018; Mahoney et al., 1999; Phillips et al., 2017) indicated that individuals from various romantic relations, such as heterosexual, homosexual, or cohabiting, often see manifestations of God in their relationship and/or believe that their relationship has sacred qualities. Previous studies have shown that the sanctification of relationship/marriage is positively associated with satisfaction with sexual relations (Dew et al., 2020; Hernandez-Kane & Mahoney, 2018), the use of positive educational methods (Mahoney, 2013), more effective coping in crises (Mahoney, 2010), and greater marital satisfaction (King et al., 2020). The RSF also mentions the difficulties arising from relationship/marriage sanctification: sacred loss, desecration, and demonization. Sacred loss relates to the spiritual knowledge that an event has injured a particular aspect of life to dispose of God's divine qualities or presence. Desecration focuses on intentionally violating or hurting a sacred object, e.g., "something sacred to me was destroyed" (Mahoney, 2013, p. 379). Demonization includes believing that the devil or demonic forces caused an event, e.g., a divorce (Mahoney, 2013). Researchers indicated that such perceptions are tied to more significant distress after divorce, including greater spiritual struggles, anger, and depression (Hawley et al., 2015; Krumrei et al., 2011; Mahoney, 2013).

The third mechanism, a family member's relationship to a religious community, is understood as belonging to a given religious/denomination group. Religious communities can support overcoming difficulties and making life choices. Research indicates that belonging to a religious community is associated with defining marital and family roles (Mahoney, 2013). However, it can also generate struggles in discovering, maintaining, or transforming marital and family relationships (Mahoney, 2010), for example, when people from a religious community accuse each other and point out immoral behavior.

In summary, the Relational Spirituality Framework developed by Mahoney (2013) provides researchers and practitioners with a map for conducting in-depth research into how

religious/spiritual beliefs or practices can be integrated into family relationships. Notably, this framework provides a starting point for research for many researchers and inspires other theories and models. For instance, Marks and Dollahite's (2017) model includes similar r/s dimensions as the RFS (individual, relational, community). However, their description and analyses focus more on the relationship between family members (father, mother, and child) and, for example, do not consider couples without children.

In addition, one of the mechanisms described in the integrative paradigm of religion and spirituality and further in the RSF is the psycho-spiritual process of sanctification. This process has received special attention from many researchers and has been analyzed in various studies (see review by Mahoney et al., 2021). However, in the Polish field of psychological research, this process has so far yet to be studied. The concept is presented in more detail below.

1.2.2 Sanctification of Romantic Relationship

The integrative paradigm of religion and spirituality (Pargament et al., 2013) indicates that people may search for, perceive, or experience various things as sacred. It can be, e.g., material objects (e.g., crucifix), time and space (e.g., churches), events and transitions (e.g., suffering), psychological attributes (e.g., the self), social attributes (e.g., patriotism), people (e.g., saints), as well as marriage or romantic relationship. The process during which people give a special (sacred) meaning to various objects is called sanctification (Mahoney & Pargament, 2005). Sanctification may refer to theological meanings that vary across different religious traditions (e.g., Dieter et al., 1987; Krok, 2013; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). For example, from a Christian theological perspective, sanctification is an inherently mysterious process through which God's actions transform objects from profane into sacred entities. In this vein, the sacrament of marriage is said to transform a heterosexual relationship into an indissolvable holy union in the eyes of the Catholic and many other Christian churches. Pargament and Mahoney's (2005) approach to sanctification is not theological. They define sanctification as a process through which aspects of life are perceived as having divine character and significance. In this case, the term sanctification is a "psychospiritual" construct. It is spiritual because of its point of reference—sacred matters. It is psychological in two ways: (1) it focuses on *a perception* of what is sacred, and (2) the methods for studying sacred matters are socially scientific rather than theological (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005).

The process of sanctification can involve (1) perceiving seemingly ordinary aspects of life as the manifestation and presence of God or a Higher Power (theistic sanctification) and/or (2) attributing sacred qualities and characteristics to them, e.g., holy, blessed, miraculous (non-theistic
sanctification; Mahoney, 2013; Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). Objects "can be perceived as a manifestation of one's images, beliefs, or experience of God. Through religious readings, education, and ritual, adherents to a wide range of traditions are taught that God's powers are manifest in many aspects of life" (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005, p. 183). The God of most religious traditions is not removed from the world's workings. The divine is said to be concerned with earthly and heavenly matters. Furthermore, the world's religions encourage their members to see God as manifest in their lives.

The process of sanctification is not limited to theistically oriented interpretations of various aspects of life (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). "Sanctification can also occur indirectly; perceptions of divine character and significance can develop by investing objects with qualities that are associated with divine character" (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005, p. 185). These sacred qualities include attributes of transcendence (e.g., holy, heavenly), ultimate value and purpose (e.g., blessed, inspiring), and boundlessness (e.g., everlasting, miraculous). Individuals could attribute sacred qualities such as these to significant objects, though they may not espouse beliefs in a God or Higher Power. Indicators of this indirect form of sanctification are commonplace in our culture. Sacred adjectives are often linked to ostensibly secular objects. People speak of a sacred trust, holy wars, saintly figures, the holy land, hero worship, God-given rights, and hallowed ground (Mahoney et al., 2021).

The proposition that something becomes sanctified through the psychological process of sanctification neither supports nor contradicts theological convictions that perceptions of sanctity correspond to ontological realities beyond people's minds. What is essential is that sanctification may occur both directly and indirectly (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). Life's aspects may be perceived as manifestations of God and as embodiments of divine or transcendent qualities. Hypothetically, people from diverse spiritual and religious backgrounds - monotheists, polytheists, pantheists, agnostics, and atheists - could employ one or both perceptual processes to infuse their daily lives with divine meaning and significance. Furthermore, sanctification could theoretically occur for individuals who are or are not socialized culturally or via a religious institution(s) to view a domain of life as reflecting sacred qualities and/or a deity's presence (Pargament et al., 2017). Thus, the sacred is not "out there," remote or disconnected from life; it is linked to people through feeling, thought, action, and motivation.

In the RSF, especially in the second mechanism, the perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, Mahoney (2013) included the process of sanctification. The sanctification of a relationship indicates to what extent spouses/partners think that their marriage/relationship is a manifestation of God (theistic sanctification) and/or is marked by sacred qualities (non-theistic sanctification; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013). Partners often perceive their relationship as a part of God's plan and/or give it sacred qualities, e.g., they think it is holy (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney et al., 2021). The following paragraph will detail studies conducted under the RSF, especially those related to the sanctification of relationships.

1.2.3 Research on R/S and Romantic Relationships

Previous studies in the psychology of religion and family have shown that r/s have essential links to various relationships and marital outcomes. Research confirmed that in married couples, religiosity was positively associated with marital commitment, stability, and satisfaction (Lakatos & Martos, 2019; Mahoney, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2023).

Many religious traditions, particularly Christianity, emphasize the importance of love, commitment, loyalty, mutual support, and forgiveness. These skills and attitudes play a significant role in the quality and durability of romantic relationships (Horváth-Szabó, 2010, as cited in Lakatos & Martos, 2019). Researchers (e.g., Saroglou et al., 2005; Wilcox & Wolfinger, 2008) indicated that religious commitment positively impacts relationship quality by strengthening values, beliefs, and behaviors that support romantic unions and marriages. Religiousness positively correlated with forgiveness (McDonald et al., 2017), commitment (Burdette et al., 2007; Janicka & Kunikowska, 2021), marital satisfaction (Krok, 2012), good conflict management skills (Gardner et al., 2008), and coping (Pargament et al., 2017). Faith and religious activities can also contribute to psychological well-being and mutual support in marriage and romantic relationships (Lambert et al., 2012).

However, r/s do not always support romantic relationships, marriage, or family life. Sometimes, it may be a source of struggle. For example, some specific religious beliefs relevant to marital stability involve considering divorce unacceptable, and thus, religious people can perceive divorce as a sacred loss (i.e., the loss of something once viewed as sacred or intended by God) or desecration (i.e., willful destruction or attack of a sacred aspect of life; Mahoney, 2013). Studies showed that such perceptions are longitudinally tied to greater distress after divorce, including greater spiritual struggles, anger, and depression (Hawley et al., 2015; Krumrei et al., 2011; Mahoney, 2013).

The RSF, because it allows to capture of both positive and negative functions of r/s, individual, relational, and communal mechanisms of r/s, and differentiates the stages of development of the romantic relationship, provides a good context for organizing existing research and making new hypotheses. I will now review existing research from the perspective of RSF.

1.2.3.1 Research in the Context of the RSF

According to the RSF, relational spirituality includes r/s cognitions, behaviors, and emotions that people may have as they strive to discover, maintain, and transform relationships within or outside organized religious contexts (Mahoney, 2013). The RSF has influenced the organization of much research in the field of psychology of religion (e.g., Dew et al., 2021; Mahoney et al., 2023; Rusu et al., 2014; Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024). Table 1 presents the relational spirituality framework with examples of the results of studies (c.f., Mahoney et al., 2023).

Table 1

		Stages of family relationships				
Three r/s	Function	Discovery	Maintenance	Transformation		
A family member's relationship with God's/Higher Power	Resources	 A prayer to God asking for help in finding a partner/partner (Mahoney, 2013). Religious affiliation is essential when selecting a marital partner (Sigalow et al., 2012). 	 Willingness to make sacrifices for the partner and the relationship (Murray et al., 2000). Greater religious attendance and Biblical conservatism are associated with a traditional division of childcare (DeMaris et al., 2011). 	 A trusting commitment to God helps to forgive the partner (Keshavarz- Afshar et al., 2016). Greater worship service attendance was correlated with an accelerated pace of remarriage (Xu & Bartkowski, 2017). 		
	Struggles	 An anxious relationship with God reduces relationship satisfaction (Farrokhabadi & Bonab, 2018). People could encounter stressful r/s conflicts internally, with others, or with God/higher powers as they decide with whom, when, and how to create romantic unions (Mahoney et al., 2023). 	 Seeing the source of marital problems in God (Butler & Harper, 1994). Couples where wives were markedly higher than husbands on r/s engagement reported greater conflict and the lowest marital quality (Gurrentz, 2017). 	 The action of a demonic force as a cause of marriage breakdown (Krumrei et al., 2011). Higher r/s commitment was associated with more frequent minor and major acts of physical aggression toward their partners (Renzetti et al., 2017). 		
The perception of the romantic/marital relationship as sacred	Resources	 Seeking a partner with a similar vision of marriage (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). Students in a dating relationship, those who privately prayed for their romantic partner's wellbeing have reported increased relationship satisfaction (Fincham & Beach, 2014). 	 Greater sanctification of close relationships was consistently associated with more positive relational adjustment (Mahoney et al., 2021). Individuals with a firmer belief that God exists and a more literal belief in Catholic teachings are more likely to view their intimate partnership as 	 Praying for your partner helps to overcome difficulties (Mahoney, 1999). Greater sanctification of relationship/marriage linked to less partner- focused revenge (Davis et al., 2012). 		

Relational Spirituality Framework with Examples Results of Studies

		Stages of family relationships			
Three r/s mechanisms	Function	Discovery	Maintenance	Transformation	
			sanctified (Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024).		
	Struggles	 Seeing one's own future relationship as incompatible with God's command (Edgell, 2005). The more college students viewed a prior romantic break up as a sacred loss/desecration and experienced spiritual struggles over the event, the more emotional distress they reported (Hawley et al., 2015). 	 God as the source of unplanned pregnancy (Mahoney, 2013). People privately praying to God as an ineffectual way to try to change or tolerate a partner's dysfunctional behavior instead of directly confronting problems (Mahoney et al., 2023). 	 A sense of sacred loss and desecration in the event of divorce (Mahoney, 2010). People who recalled experiencing their parental divorce as a spiritual loss and desecration reported greater current personal and family-related distress (Warner et al., 2009). 	
A family member's relationship to a religious/spiritual community	Resources	 The religious community as a potential meeting place for future spouses (Mahoney, 1999). Heterosexuals partners rely on their religious community to help structure their role in marriage (Edgell, 2005). 	 Belonging to a religious community increases parental involvement (Mahoney et al., 2001). Belonging to a religious community increases belief that marriage has spiritual purposes (Dollahite & Marks, 2009). 	 Clergy assistance in solving family problems (Chalfant et al., 1990). Women can gain support from their community either to leave or to reconcile with an abusive spouse (Yick, 2008). 	
	Struggles	- Conflict with the religious community resulting from the choice of life partner (Mahoney, 2013).	- Parents from religious groups with highly conservative social values may worry their teens will adopt excessively permissive attitudes or actions about media, sexuality, or alcohol use (Mahoney, 2013).	- Lack of support from the religious community in a difficult family situation, especially divorce (Mahoney, 2013).	

The RSF was also applied to research in master's and doctoral theses. For instance, Bednarz, in 2022 from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (Poland), in her master's thesis, studied the association between the sanctification of marriage and the quality of the marital relationship and tested the mediating role of communication in a close relationship. She indicated that the sanctification of marriage positively correlated with the quality of the marital relationship, and the supportive communication mediated this relationship. Karyadeva, in 2020, from Sofia University (Palo Alto, California, USA), analyzed in her doctoral dissertation the relationship between marriage sanctification and commitment in monogamous heterosexual marriage relationships. She used Pargament and Mahoney's (2005) approach to sanctification and Stanley and Markman's (1992) commitment model. She showed that the belief that one's marriage was sacred (whether it was theistic or nontheistic) predicted a more significant aspect of "wanting" commitment than "having."

The RSF continues to provide a perspective that allows new hypotheses to be posed in an organized manner. It divides the literature into two main approaches to assessing r/s factors. First refers to global r/s factors, measuring, e.g., individual's frequency of religious attendance or overall rating of importance of religion, often using one or two items. The second refers to specific r/s factors that can enhance or undermine relational and/or individual well-being, such as sanctification of relationship/marriage, secure attachment to God, or demonization (Mahoney et al., 2023). Thus, the RSF distinguishes between both helpful and harmful r/s factors embedded in individuals' relationships with (a) perceived supernatural figures (e.g., deity), (b) other individuals (e.g., romantic partner, spouse), and (c) the religious community (e.g., religious leaders), which can affect relational and personal well-being (Mahoney, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2023).

The reviews of scientific research on r/s and romantic relationships and marriage conducted by Mahoney from 1999 to 2010 suggested that global r/s factors (such as religious attendance or meaning) were reciprocally tied with forming and maintaining marital relationships. An updated review of the literature in early 2022, including studies of non-marital relationships, yielded a more complex and ambiguous picture of the intersection of r/s factors and contemporary romantic relationship characteristics (Mahoney et al., 2023). For instance, compelling cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence showed that some specific r/s cognitions, such as sanctification of relationship/marriage, predicted better relationship functioning for unmarried and married couples (Mahoney et al., 2023). For this reason, future research should mainly focus on search-specific r/s factors that enhance versus undermine the creation and maintenance of romantic relationships across diverse types of couples (e.g., same-sex, dating, and cohabiting) and various cultural and religious contexts, e.g., Christian, Muslim (Mahoney et al., 2023).

1.2.3.2 Research on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship

One of the first studies of the sanctification process that analyzed the sanctification of the marital relationship and its relationship with the approach toward marital conflict was conducted by Mahoney et al. (1999). The results showed that greater sanctification was related to a lower frequency of marital conflicts and less frequent use of stonewalling and verbal aggression by one or both spouses. Thus, greater sanctification may motivate partners to avoid maladaptive behavior and to resist negative impulses that would increase their or others' psychosocial distress (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005).

Stanford et al. (2014) analyzed the research on 342 marriages and indicated that sanctification is positively related to satisfaction with marriage and negatively to dissatisfaction with the relationship. They showed that willingness to sacrifice can mediate the relationship between sanctification and the quality of the marital relationship. Similar evidence was provided by Kusner and colleagues (2014), pointing out that spouses who viewed their relationship more sacred had better problem-solving skills, especially as they prepared themselves for parenthood. Rayesh and Kalantar (2018) researched couples living in Teheran. They indicated that the sanctification of marriage (theistic) and prayer for the spouse negatively correlate with marital infidelity. Sabey et al. (2014) analyzed the relationship between spiritual cognition (i.e., perceived sacred qualities of marriage) and marital satisfaction. They tested whether that relationship is mediated by compassionate love in a sample of older married couples. In their research, they applied the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model. Results revealed that when wives perceived more sacred qualities in their marriages, they had higher marital satisfaction, and the satisfaction of their husbands was also higher. The couples' reports of compassionate love partially mediated these links. Rauer and Volling (2015) used the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model to examine the combined and interactive influences of husbands' and wives' relational spiritual beliefs and practices on their observed problem-solving behaviors in 58 happily married couples. They found that both spouses' relational spirituality beliefs and practices were linked to how they handled conflict. Dew et al. (2020), based on data from 1,300 married couples (wives and husbands), examined the associations between individual marital sanctification, joint religious activities in the home, joint worship service attendance, and reported sexual satisfaction. In addition to showing the association between religious characteristics and sexual satisfaction, they examined potential mediators, such as marital commitment, maintenance behaviors, marital conflict, and time spent together. For the analysis, they used the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model. Results showed that individual-level reports of marital sanctification were positively associated with wives' and husbands' reports of sexual satisfaction. Joint religious activities in the home were positively associated with husbands' reports of sexual satisfaction. Marital commitment, relationship maintenance behaviors, and spousal time mediated these associations for husbands, while commitment mediated the association for wives.

In 2021, Mahoney et al. conducted a study using meta-analytic techniques to summarize the strength of correlations between sanctification and psychosocial functioning across diverse aspects of life (e.g., the human body, strivings, work, marriage, and parenting). They included data published between 1999 and July 2019 in peer-reviewed journals (N = 49) and dissertations that had yet to be published (N = 14). They identified 66 independent cases involving positive outcomes and 43 independent cases with negative outcomes. They found that greater sanctification of various types of close relationships was associated with more positive relational adjustment (i.e., average r = .24, CI = .20 to .29) and lower rates of relational problems (average r = .12, CI = .06 to .18).

To sum up, previous studies have shown that process of sanctification, especially the sanctification of relationships/marriage, has several implications for human functioning: (1) people are more likely to invest a great deal of their time and energy in sacred matters, and therefore also into the romantic relationship, which they see as having sacred qualities; (2) people go to greater lengths to preserve and protect whatever they perceive to be sacred; (3) sacred aspects of life are likely to elicit spiritual emotions of attraction (e.g., love, adoration, gratitude) and trepidation (e.g., awe, fear, humility); (4) the sacred appears to represent a potentially powerful personal and social resource that people can tap throughout their lives; and (5) the loss of the sacred can have devastating effects.

1.2.3.3 Polish Research in the Field of Psychology of R/S and Romantic Relationships

Many psychological studies in the Polish socio-cultural context examined links between religiousness and marital outcomes. Some studies (e.g., Janicka & Kunikowska, 2021; Krok, 2012; Śliwak et al., 2017) focused on general and individual factors of religiousness such as frequency of church attendance, religious attitudes, or the centrality of religiousness. Braun-Gałkowska (1985), for instance, found that partners with positive religious attitudes were characterized by more vital marital satisfaction and a sense of success and happiness. Krok (2012) showed that more frequent church attendance and the higher relevance of religion are related to greater marital satisfaction. Plopa (2005) noticed that partners' religiousness significantly predicted relationship satisfaction. Śliwak et al. (2017) indicated that the centrality of religiousness correlated positively with two types of communication in marriage: support and commitment. Janicka and Kunikowska (2021) found that high similarity in partners' religious attitudes and behaviors was associated with greater relationship commitment (measured as devotion and obligation).

Several studies (e.g., Brudek, 2011, as cited in Krok, 2012; Gosztyła & Gelleta, 2015; Kiełek-Rataj, 2019) used Jaworski's (1987/1998; 1989) concept of personal religiousness, defined as a person's involvement in a relationship with a personal God. "The essential feature of the relationship between God and humans is mutual dynamic presence and love. And this relationship constitutes a central, long-lasting, and stable value and doesn't destroy any receptiveness to new knowledge and experiences" (Jaworski, 1989, p. 67). Jaworski (1989) also created the Personal Religious Scale to measure this religiousness construct. Brudek (2011, as cited in Krok, 2012), in

his study of one hundred and eleven married couples, noted that the higher the degree of personal religiousness, the greater the overall satisfaction with the marital relationship, the motivation to deepen the marital bond, the possibility of self-realization of the partners in the relationship, the convergence of views on how to experience the relationship, and the lower the belief of failure in the area of the marital relationship. Gosztyła and Gelleta (2015) analyzed the associations between personal religiousness and the marital relationship quality among parents with children diagnosed with autism. They indicated that spouses who showed a higher level of personal religiousness declared they had a closer and more satisfactory intimacy, resemblance, and self-realization with their partners and felt less disappointed in their marriages. Kiełek-Rataj (2019) found that the wife's religiousness significantly predicted the husband's marital satisfaction.

Some studies have considered the situational contexts of the marriage relationship, such as alcohol abuse, coping, divorce, and secularism. Zarosińska and Śliwak (2020), for example, indicated that the high centrality of religiosity of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous correlates with the high quality and durability of their marital relationships. Wendołowska and Czyżowska (2021) used the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model to assess the association between the centrality of religiosity and dyadic coping in close romantic relationships. In their study, the centrality of religiosity and dyadic coping were unrelated. However, a comparison of catholic vs. civil marriages and cohabiting couples showed that both spouses in catholic marriages have significantly higher scores on the centrality of religiosity, and Polish religious men rate their common dyadic coping as low. In turn, Paprzycka et al. (2020) examined Poles' attitudes toward the permanence of marriage and their opinions on justifiable reasons for divorce and staying in an unsatisfying relationship. Their study showed that Poles' private and intimate lives are becoming independent of religion. Religiousness in the Polish cultural context appears to be a relevant factor supporting the indissolubility of marriage, but it is neither the only nor the main factor. Children's well-being and love were the most frequently cited reasons for remaining in a marital relationship, even when dissatisfied. Tomaka and Ciesielska (2020) analyzed how Wulff's approaches toward religiousness were related to married life in the context of increasing secularization. They found that people who accepted God's existence had a stronger belief in the stability of their marriage, and forgiveness mediated this relationship.

Despite the multitude and variety of studies, the vast majority have focused on general and individual dimensions of religiousness and had cross-sectional designs. To my best knowledge, only one study has analyzed marital dyads in the actor-partner model (Wendołowska & Czyżowska, 2021), and one study to date used RFS, including the psychospiritual process of sanctification of marriage/relationship (Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024). Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al.

(2024) analyzed the relationships between post-critical beliefs and the sanctification of marriage/relationship. They indicated that greater affirmation of God's existence as a real and literal interpretation of religious doctrines were associated with greater perceived stability of the marital/cohabiting union. The sanctification of the marriage/relationship mediated this association. The findings implied that Polish individuals who strongly believe in God's existence and a literal understanding of Catholic doctrine are more likely to view their intimate partnership as sanctified, which, in turn, is associated with greater relational commitment and a lower risk of union dissolution.

The RSF provides a relatively new approach for Polish psychologists and offers many opportunities for research questions and hypotheses. We still need in-depth research to understand better how specific r/s variables could be associated with various romantic relationship outcomes. One of them is the sanctification of marriage/relationship. Thus, the presented dissertation aims to provide new knowledge about how this process could work among Polish couples.

1.3 Quality of the Romantic Relationship

Interpersonal relationships are one of the most essential areas of our lives. Berscheid (1999, p. 261) wrote, "We are born into relationships, and we live our lives in relationships with others [...]." In general, we may notice that relationships are perceived as an enduring association between persons (Reis, 2001), which occurs if two people (sometimes more) impact each other and are interdependent in that a change in one person causes a change in the other and vice versa (Kelly et al., 1983). People form many relationships throughout their lifetime, e.g., with parents, children, friends, colleagues, romantic partners, or husband/wife. These close relationships play a huge role in people's lives.

Close contact with others contributes to the development of needs and orientation to the outside world and is one of the most critical factors in giving meaning to life (Campbell et al., 1976; Farooqi, 2014). Close contact makes people build emotional relationships with others, form bonds, and enter intimate relationships (Dwyer, 2006; Janicka, 2006). Closeness in relationships positively influences health and contributes to happiness and perceived psychological well-being (Myers, 1999). Sullivan (1953), in the interpersonal theory of psychiatry, suggests that relationships form the essence of personality, and loneliness, isolation, rejection, and the failure to develop close or supportive relationships contribute to clinical symptomatology. Never and Lenhart (2006) claimed that relationships are in constant interaction. Their ongoing interactions impact health, including well-being, life satisfaction, and longevity (Never & Lenhart, 2006).

Romantic unions have become a unique area of research interest among the different relationships people can form. Collins et al. (2009) define romantic union as mutual, ongoing, and voluntary interactions between two partners characterized by specific expressions of affection and intimacy. Similarly, Hinde (1979) claimed that a romantic relationship involves a series of interactions (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional) between two individuals known to each other.

There is a great deal of variance in romantic relationships. VanLear et al. (2006) distinguished casual dating, serious or exclusive dating ("going steady"), and committed relationships (e.g., marriage, cohabitation, or engagement). Among cohabiting couples, the distinguished between those who are premarriage (i.e., who are engaged, intend to be married, or are using cohabitation as a "trial" for marriage), those who view cohabitation as an alternative to marriage (i.e., common law marriages), and those who cohabit without any agreed-on long-term plans (i.e., who are living together for the sake of convenience). Similar distinctions can be made for heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

Previous studies of romantic relationships and marriages have been examining factors related to the quality of relationships (e.g., Jankowska, 2016; Johnson, 1995; Hudson et al., 2020; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney et al., 2023). The most popular variable in this context has become the quality of romantic relationship/marriage. However, it is an ambiguous term that is often used interchangeably with terms such as "happiness," "success," "adjustment," or "satisfaction." There is also little consensus around the definition of relationship/marriage quality or its theory (Jankowska, 2016; Johnson, 1995; Fincham & Beach, 2010). For example, Lewis and Spanier (1979) defined relationship/marital quality as the subjective evaluation of a couple's relationship on several dimensions, such as reasonable adjustment, adequate communication, relationship/marital happiness, integration, satisfaction, and commitment. Trawińska (1977) presented four aspects of the quality of the romantic/marital relationship: love, family cohesiveness, mutual security (including concern for the family's well-being), and developmental prospects. Morry et al. (2010) claimed that relationship/marriage quality refers, in general, to how positively or negatively individuals feel about their relationships.

Generally, studies have shown that romantic unions that foster well-being are perceived to have high relationship quality (Clark & Grote, 2003). High relationship quality, in turn, involves subjective and interpersonal experiences such as affection, intimacy, nurturance, and satisfaction (Dush & Amato, 2005), understanding and care (Clark et al., 1986), expression of emotions (Feeney, 1995; Clark et al., 2001), forgiveness (McCullough, 2000), communication (Jankowska, 2016), and well-being (Hudson et al., 2020).

To summarize, two main approaches exist to understanding and studying the quality of relationships/marriages. First, the intrapersonal approach means that relationship/marriage quality is not about the behaviors and interactions in the relationship but only refers to how partners rate their happiness or satisfaction with the relationship (a subjective evaluation of a couple's relationship). Second, the interpersonal or relational approach focuses on patterns of interaction between a couple. It examines how couples communicate, resolve conflict, engage in relationships, and spend time together (Reynolds et al., 2014). Considering these two perspectives, I decided to express the quality of a romantic/marriage relationship using these two dimensions: intrapersonal (as relationship/marriage commitment).

1.3.1 Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the most studied characteristic of a romantic relationship. (Maroufizadeh et al., 2018). However, the authors have differing views on how to define it (Reynolds et al., 2014). In the literature, various terms are used, such as "relationship/marriage happiness," "relationship/marriage adjustment," or "relationship/marriage success" (Jankowiak, 2007; Reynolds et al., 2014).

Relationship/marriage satisfaction is a subjective assessment of the "goodness" or "badness" of a romantic union (Gable & Poore, 2008) compared to other's relations and experiences. Janicka and Niebrzydowski (1994, p. 66) claimed, "A marriage is judged to be successful, matched, or of high quality only if there is a subjective sense of happiness in the partners." Plopa (2005; 2006), in his concept of a matched marriage, emphasized that the high quality of the romantic union depends on (1) intimacy, i.e., the level of satisfaction from being in a close relationship with another person, (2) self-realization in marriage, (3) the level of similarity in adopting different strategies for managing the family system, and (4) the level of perceived disappointment from the relationship. According to Plopa (2005; 2006), marriage satisfaction is associated with realizing one's needs and providing mutual support, closeness, and trust. Braun-Gałkowska (2008) noticed that marriage satisfaction is linked with the ability to express feelings, set proper boundaries, and communicate. Hendrick (1988, p. 10), in turn, defined relationship satisfaction as "the measurement of a person's feelings and thoughts about their marriage or similar intimate relationship". Hendrick (1988) created the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), which is one the most widely used instruments for measuring relationship satisfaction in research settings and various types of romantic unions, e.g., married couples, cohabiting couples, engaged couples, or dating couples (Reynolds et al., 2014). "The rationale for studying relationship/marital satisfaction stems from its centrality in individual and family well-being, from the benefits that accrue to society when strong relationships are formed and maintained, and from the need to develop empirically defensible interventions for couples that prevent or alleviate relationship distress and breakups and divorce" (Bradbury et al., 2000, p. 964). In this dissertation, I based on Hendrick's (1998) definition of relationship satisfaction and used the RAS adopted into Polish by Adamczyk et al. (2022).

1.3.1.1 Development of Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Does relationship/marriage satisfaction change throughout our lives? Although most people want to maintain a happy and satisfying relationship, satisfaction with the romantic union often changes over the years (Bühler et al., 2021; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Researchers (Birditt et al., 2012; Lavner & Bradbury, 2010; Umberson et al., 2005) indicated that couples characterized by high levels of satisfaction in the first few years of their romantic union reported a very modest or no decline in relationship quality over the years. In contrast, couples who begin their romantic unions with low relationship quality experience a faster and more rapid decline in satisfaction. Bradbury and Karney (2019) noticed that this decline applies to only a minority of couples and that most couples experience no change in relationship satisfaction. Cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses have led to divergent conclusions about developmental trajectories of relationship satisfaction across life (Bühler et al., 2021; Bradbury & Karney, 2019).

In the recent systematic review and meta-analysis, Bühler et al. (2021) summarized the evidence on the development of relationship satisfaction as a function of age and relationship duration. They gathered cross-sectional and longitudinal data from 165 independent samples, including 165,039 participants. Their findings demonstrated that while the overall trend included decreases and increases in relationship satisfaction across the lifespan, the trajectory differed significantly between the two temporal indicators, i.e., age and relationship duration. While relationship satisfaction showed a U-shaped trend as a function of age (Figure 4A), relationship satisfaction showed a more complex, dynamic pattern as a function of relationship duration (Figure 4B). Notably, concerning age, relationship satisfaction declined from 20 to 40, reached its lowest point at age 40, then increased until age 65, and reached a plateau in late adulthood. As for the relationship duration, relationship satisfaction decreased during the first 10 years of the relationship, reached a low point at 10 years, then increased to 20 years, and then reduced again.

Figure 4

Development of relationship satisfaction as a function of age, from age 20 to 76 years (A), and duration, from 3 months to 46 years after beginning the relationship (B) (Bühler et al., 2021, p. 21).



1.3.1.2 Sex Differences

Are men more likely to experience high relationship/marriage satisfaction? There is no clear answer to this question. On the one hand, some studies have found that women are generally less satisfied with their marriages than men (Brown et al., 2015; Dush et al., 2008; VanLaningham et al., 2001). On the other, some findings indicated that there were no gender differences (Brown et al., 2015; Yucel, 2018; Jackson, 2014), and nearly half of newlyweds' husbands and wives shared the same level of marriage quality during the first four years of their relationship (Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). Although studies have shown mixed results, the role of gender in relationship/marriage satisfaction may vary across diverse cultures as a function of culturally specific factors such as gender roles or sexual egalitarianism (Sorokowski et al., 2019). Therefore, it is worth including this factor in future research (Reynolds et al., 2014).

1.3.1.3 Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Across Intimate Unions

In which type of romantic relationship are partners more satisfied? Researchers indicated that married couples seem more satisfied with their relationship than unmarried cohabiters or reparented couples (Cassepp-Borges et al., 2023; Jose et al., 2010; Reynolds et al., 2014). This may be because the transition to marriage is a specific period that could increase satisfaction with a relationship (Lorber et al., 2015), and dating couples with greater relationship satisfaction are likelier to marry (Keizer, 2014). Interesting results were provided by studies of older couples (Brown & Kawamura, 2010). Older couples showed little difference in relationship quality, whether married or cohabiting. They explain that this likely reflects differences in attitudes towards and beliefs about cohabitation. For young adults, cohabitation may be seen as a weaker

tie than marriage, with lower levels of commitment or a stage in courtship leading to marriage. Older cohabiting adults may more often perceive their relationship as a long-term alternative to marriage. Age, gender, duration of relationship, and type of relationship are not the only predictors of relationship/marriage satisfaction. Previous studies have indicated other psychological factors influencing satisfaction with romantic relationships (Farooqi, 2014; Hendrick et al., 1998; Lakatos & Martos, 2019).

1.3.1.4 Predictors of Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Many factors have been identified that determine relationship satisfaction. In her review, Farooqi (2014) indicated the most important factors: love styles, personality, interaction patterns, and partner support. Perceptions of a partner's love style (specifically Eros, Ludus, and Agape) significantly correlated with one's and partner's relationship satisfaction (Hendrick et al. 1988). Neuroticism and negative emotionality were consistently negatively associated with self-rated relationship quality and satisfaction (Caughlin et al., 2000; Robins et al., 2002; Watson et al., 2000). Conflict tactics (e.g., criticism, showing anger, sharing information, or changing the subject) were also significant predictors of relationship/marriage satisfaction (Meeks et al. 1998). Supportive behaviors toward partners were associated with relationship security and satisfaction (Reis et al., 2004).

Religiosity and spirituality have also been confirmed to predict relationship/marriage sanctification (Lakatos & Martos, 2019; Mahoney, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2023). Religion/spirituality might be associated with relationship/marriage satisfaction directly, e.g., by encouraging values, beliefs, and behaviors that are helpful to marriage, such as commitment, fidelity, and forgiveness (Wilcox & Wolfinger, 2008; Lambert et al., 2012), or indirectly, e.g., religious beliefs and practices can promote psychological well-being, conformity to social norms, and social support among partners, all of which are linked to higher satisfaction with romantic relationship (Dew et al., 2020; Mahoney et al., 2023).

Most current research has shown that global r/s factors (such as religious attendance or meaning) correlated with higher relationship/marriage satisfaction and commitment (Allgood et al., 2008; Ellison et al., 2011; Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008). However, the specific r/s factor, such as the sanctification of romantic relationships/marriage, can shed new light on the associations between r/s and satisfaction with romantic relationships. For example, Stanford et al. (2014) analyzed 342 marriages and indicated that sanctification positively related to marriage satisfaction. The sanctification of relationship/marriage (theistic sanctification) negatively correlated with marital infidelity in a sample of couples living in Teheran (Rayesh & Kalantar, 2018). Wives'

greater perceptions of the sacred qualities of their marriage (nontheistic sanctification) were linked with greater marital satisfaction for both spouses (Sabey et al., 2014). Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al. (2024) found that the sanctification of romantic relationship/marriage correlated with a greater perception of relationship stability in a sample of Polish married and cohabiting individuals.

In conclusion, as noted by Bradbury et al. (2000), the romantic relationship satisfaction dimension is an important dimension of relationship quality. Relationship/marriage satisfaction is not a constant factor; it changes over time and is predicted by many factors. One of them is the psycho-spiritual process of relationship/marriage sanctification. However, satisfaction refers to personal satisfaction with the relationship, and the romantic relationship also has an interpersonal dimension. Therefore, I also included the variable commitment in the study.

1.3.2 Romantic Relationship Commitment

Why do some relationships persist, whereas others fail? If partners love each other and feel happy with their relationship, they should be more likely to remain involved with one another. In other words, sticking with a satisfying relationship is more accessible than a miserable one. However, some relationships continue even though partners are not satisfied. Still, they decide to stay together, for example, for the sake of the children or because of their religious/spiritual beliefs. Researchers (Mahoney et al., 1999; Reynolds et al., 2014; Rusbult, 1980) have shown that beyond satisfaction (intrapersonal dimension), commitment (interpersonal dimension) is also crucial to building, forming, and maintaining the romantic/marital relationship.

Many definitions, theories, and models describe commitment in romantic relationships. Generally, commitment is the tendency of partners to feel psychologically attached to the relationship even when difficulties and crises arise. According to Rhoades et al. (2010), partner commitment is the desire or obligation to stay in a relationship. Rusbult (1980) defined relationship commitment as the desire to persist in the relationship and maintain emotional attachment.

Most theories of relationship commitment are rooted in interdependence theory (e.g., Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and social exchange theories (e.g., Cook & Emerson, 1978; Cook & Rice, 2006). Interdependence theory posits that the tendency for relationships to develop and persist depends not only on the personal characteristics of the two individuals but also on the interdependence between the two partners, e.g., the partners' level of satisfaction with the relationship (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Social exchange theory (Cook & Emerson, 1978; Cook & Rice, 2006) assumes that partners apply economic principles when evaluating their relationship, consciously or unconsciously, conducting a cost-benefit analysis while comparing alternatives. According to social exchange theory, partners will pursue

relationships with rewards that are more significant than costs and abandon those with greater costs than benefits.

The most popular models of relationship commitment based on the above theories are the cohesiveness model proposed by Levinger (1965, 1979), the commitment model presented by Stanley and Markman (1992), and the investment model invited by Rusbult (1980). These models will be described in more detail below.

1.3.2.1 The Cohesiveness Model of Commitment

In the cohesiveness model of commitment, Levinger (1965, 1979) identified the factors responsible for the cohesion of a romantic relationship and its (eventual) breakdown. He partially based his considerations on Lewin's (1951) theory. Lewin (1951), in his field theory, examined patterns of interaction between the individual and the total field, or environment, and explained restraining forces that exist between people and accordingly separate them from one another, and that surround people and bind them to one another. Considering these points of view, Levinger (1965, 1979), in his model, distinguished three types of force in romantic relationships: (1) present attractions or the forces that draw partners to their relationships; (2) alternative attractions, or the forces that pull partners away from their relationships; and (3) barriers, or the forces that prevent partners from leaving their relationships.

The attraction forces include present and alternative attractions based on positive outcomes resulting from membership in a relationship, such as love, money, status, or other desirable resources. Levinger (1979) identified three categories of these forces: (1) material attractions, such as income and home ownership; (2) symbolic attractions, such as educational achievement or professional status; and (3) affectional attractions, such as companionship and sexual fulfillment.

The barrier forces affect the likelihood of staying in the current relationship, serving as disincentives to ending the relationship, even as attraction forces diminish or disappear. Levinger (1979), as with the forces of attraction category, described three categories of barriers: (1) material barriers, including the loss of income associated with separation and expenses incurred in divorce; (2) symbolic barriers, such as fear of social disapproval or religious beliefs about the indissolubility of marriage; and (3) affectional barriers, such as the presence of dependent children.

According to Levinger (1965, 1979), three categories of force have an independent effect on cohesiveness and the probability of persisting in a relationship. For example, if Kamil perceives that the present attraction of his relationship with Kate is high, anticipates that the attraction to alternative relationships would be low, and there are high barriers to terminating his relationship, he should be more likely to persist and commit to this relationship. On the other hand, to the extent that present attractions are low, alternative attractions are high, and barriers to termination are low, his persistence and commitment to this relationship should be less probable.

1.3.2.2 The Dedication and Constraint Model of Commitment

The commitment model presented by Stanley and Markman (1992) focused broadly on the psychological aspects of the "*want to*" and the "*have to*" in commitment: dedication and constraint, respectively. As Stanley and Markman (1992) mentioned, the works on this model were influenced by the research of sociologists Johnson (1973, 1991) and Levinger (1965, 1979).

Johnson's (1973, 1991) commitment model described three aspects of commitment: personal, moral, and structural. Personal commitment is the desire to be with a partner in the future. Moral commitment includes values and beliefs that promote persistence. Structural commitment refers to how elements such as the quality of alternatives, the amount of investment in the relationship, and the difficulty of the steps needed to end the relationship affect the likelihood of staying in the relationship regardless of its quality. Levinger (1965, 1979) distinguished three types of force in romantic relationships: present and alternative attractions and barriers.

In Stanley and Markman's (1992) commitment model, Johnson's personal commitment is best represented by dedication, whereas structural and moral commitment is by constraint. This two-component model is consistent with Levinger's (1965) discussion of attraction and barrier forces. Stanley and Markman (1992) described a model reflecting this primary push and pull of commitment as most people experience it in romantic relationships:

"Personal dedication refers to the desire of an individual to maintain or improve the quality of his or her relationship for the joint benefit of the participants. It is evidenced by a desire (and associated behaviors) not only to continue in the relationship, but also to improve it, to sacrifice for it, to invest in it, to link personal goals to it, and to seek the partner's welfare, not simply one's own. In contrast, constraint commitment refers to forces that constrain individuals to maintain relationships regardless of their personal dedication to them. Constraints may arise from either external or internal pressures, and they favor relationship stability by making termination of a relationship more economically, socially, personally, or psychologically costly. (pp. 595-596)"

In other words, as highlighted by Rhoades et al. (2006), dedication refers to intrinsic interpersonal commitment and is characterized by a sense of working as "we," a desire for a shared long-term future, a readiness to give one's partner or the relationship a high priority, and a willingness to make personal sacrifices for the good of one's partner or relationship. Constraint refers to external pressures to continue the relationship, such as financial considerations, perceived low quality of alternative partners or lifestyles, values regarding divorce, and difficulties in ending the relationship.

According to the model (Stanley & Markman, 1992), personal dedication and constraint commitment are not expected to be independent. For instance, high personal dedication during engagement increases constraint as the couple expresses their dedication by committing themselves to marriage, children, joint possessions, etc. "Simply put, today's dedication is tomorrow's constraints (Stanley & Markman, 1992, p. 597)."

What is essential is that constraints might help explain why some unhappy couples stay together and why some cohabiting unions, even high-risk unions, develop into marriages (Rhoades et al., 2006; Stanley et al., 2010; Stanley & Markman, 1992). When satisfaction is low, but constraints are high, it may be too costly for partners to leave the relationship. However, partners do not always perceive constraints as unfavorable until or unless satisfaction declines to the point that the desire to leave exists. Happy couples tend to view constraints, such as shared property, friends, and children, as sources of joy and evidence of investment. The growing weight of constraints become more critical only when dissatisfaction sets in, generating a sense of being stuck in the relationship. Constraints may reinforce dedication's development or maintenance during transitory dissatisfaction because they have some ability to enhance or reinvigorate dedication. Finally, constraints might be destructive when they keep people in damaging relationships.

Stanley and Markman (1992) created the 55-Item Commitment Inventory to provide a "conceptually rich measure of commitment" (p. 595) that measures two related commitment types: dedication and constraint. This method and its revised version (Owen et al., 2011) are commonly used in many studies (e.g., Rhoades et al., 2006; Stanley et al., 2004). Janicka and Szymczak (2017) made a Polish adaptation of the Commitment Inventory. The Polish version includes 19 items from which three dimensions have been detached: the bond with the partner, the importance of the relationship, and concern for the partner's well-being.

1.3.2.3 The Investment Model

The author of the investment model is Rusbult (1980, 1983). Her model originates from the interdependence theory and incorporates interdependence constructs to understand relationship phenomena (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Rusbult et al., 2012). The main principle of interdependence theory underlines that dependence is a central structural property of relationships (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Dependence describes the degree to which an individual "needs" or relies solely on a relationship to achieve desired outcomes (Stanley et al., 2010).

The interdependence theory identifies two processes through which dependence grows: satisfaction level and quality of alternatives (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006; Stanley et al., 2010). Satisfaction level refers to the subjective evaluation of a relationship. It determines the degree to which the partner in the relationship satisfies the partner's most essential needs, including security, intimacy, sexuality, and belongingness. The more a person's needs are met, the more satisfied he or she will be. Quality of alternatives describes the perceived desirability of the best available alternative to the relationship. The quality of alternatives increases in the degree to which a person's most essential needs could be met outside the current relationship. Thus, that theory suggests that dependence is higher when an individual wants to persist in a relationship (i.e., high satisfaction) and has no choice but to persist (i.e., alternatives are weak; Stanley et al., 2010).

Rusbult (1980, 1983) extended the interdependence theory by asserting that a third factor – investment size – also influences relationship dependence. This factor describes the size and importance of the resources associated with the relationship, the value of which would be reduced or lost if the relationship were to end. As a relationship develops, partners invest much effort; for example, they may reveal their private thoughts and spend much time together. In addition, partners make mutual friends or have offspring. These investments increase dependency because they increase the cost of ending the relationship. Partners can also see them as a robust psychological incentive to persist in the relationship.

The investment model further extends the interdependence theory by suggesting that feelings of commitment emerge due to increasing dependence. The commitment level is defined "as intent to persist in a relationship, including long-term orientation toward the involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment to it (e.g., a sense of "wellness"; Rusbult et al., 1998, pp. 359-360)".

In the context of this model, it is worth pointing out that commitment differs from dependence (Rusbult et al., 1998; Stanley et al., 2010). Stanley et al. (2010, p. 618) explain that "dependence is a structural property that describes the additive effects of wanting to persist (feeling satisfied), needing to persist (having high investments), and having no choice but to persist (possessing poor alternatives). As people become increasingly dependent, they tend to develop strong commitment."

Commitment is, therefore, the sense of allegiance established to the source of one's dependence (Rusbult et al., 1998; Stanley et al., 2010). For example, because Kamil is dependent on Kate, he develops an inclination to persist with her, begins to think of himself and Kate as "we," and tends to consider the broader implications of his actions - implications beyond his immediate

self-interest, including the impact on the relationship next week, next month and next year. Moreover, commitment is the psychological state that directly influences everyday behavior in relationships, including decisions to persist. According to the investment model, commitment could mediate the effects of the three bases of dependence (i.e., satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size) on various relationship maintenance mechanisms (e.g., accommodation, forgiveness, or sacrifice; see Figure 5; Rusbult et al., 1998; Stanley et al., 2010).

Figure 5

The Investment Model of Commitment Processes (Rusbult et al., 2012, p. 224).



Over the years, the investment model has been used in many studies considering participants from different ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Lin & Rusbult, 1995), homosexual and heterosexual (e.g., Kurdek, 1995), violent (e.g., Rhatigan & Axsom, 2006), socially marginalized (e.g., Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006) and friendships (e.g., Hirofumi, 2003) relationships. The model has also been employed in other non-relational contexts with non-relational targets of commitments. For instance, organizational and job commitment (e.g., Oliver, 1990), business interactions (Ping, 1997), or commitment to medical regimen (Putnam et al., 1994). The results of these studies and meta-analyses conducted by Le and Agnew (2003) confirm the usefulness of this model.

Rusbult et al. (1998) also developed the Investment Model Scale to measure commitment level and three bases of dependence: satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. The analyses showed that the items designed to measure each construct exhibited good reliability, with high item-total correlations (above .40) and strong alpha coefficients (above .82). Factor analyses confirmed four factors measuring four independent constructs: the Commitment Level (e.g., *I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner*), the Satisfaction Level (e.g., *Our relationship makes me very happy*), the Quality of Alternatives (e.g., *My needs for intimacy, Our relationship makes me very happy*).

companionship, etc., could easily be fulfilled in an alternative relationship), and the Investment Size (e.g., *I feel very involved in our relationship-like I have put a great deal into it).*

In summary, the researchers (Johnson, 1978, 1982; Levinger, 1965, 1979; Rusbult et al., 1998; Stanley & Markman, 1992) and their commitment models emphasize different components or dynamics of commitment. We can notice that although different theorists prefer different terms for specific components, one commitment model could be easily translated into another (Stanley et al., 2010). Furthermore, a construct seen as a commitment component in one analysis may be seen as a correlate or outcome of commitment in another, depending on the research question (Stanley & Markman, 1992).

For this dissertation, I have included the definition of commitment proposed by Rusbult et al. (1998). In that context, commitment is understood "as intent to persist in a relationship, including long-term orientation toward the involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment to it (e.g., a sense of "wellness"; Rusbult et al., 1998, pp. 359-360)" and is measured by Commitment Level subscale in the Investment Model Scale (Rusbult et al., 1998). I decided to do this for several reasons. First, Rusbult's (1980) model and her understanding of commitment are particularly effective in predicting permanence in many types of romantic relationships, e.g., marital, cohabitation, lesbian, and gay relationships (Le & Agnew, 2003). Second, this type of commitment (described as an intent to persist in a romantic relationship) is particularly interesting to analyze in the context of RSF, especially its associations with partners' perception of their romantic unions as sacred. We might suppose that sanctification may significantly increase the intention to stay in a relationship/marriage. There is a lack of research showing how this association. Third, Rusbult's (1980) investment model and the definition of commitment have not become of particular interest to Polish researchers compared to Stanley and Markman's (1992) model (see Janicka & Szymczak, 2017). Fourth, Levinger's (1965, 1979) cohesion model does not have a measure to assess his construct. Finally, the two dimensions of commitment proposed by Stanley and Markman (1992) have already been analyzed in the context of the link between relationship/marriage sanctification and commitment in Mylantia Karyadeva's (2020; Sofia University Palo Alto, California) doctoral dissertation.

As with relationship/marriage satisfaction, commitment develops across the duration of a romantic union, it is influenced by gender and relationship type and associated with various predictors. The paragraphs below will present these variations.

1.3.2.4 Development of Romantic Relationship Commitment

How does commitment develop in romantic unions? Sternberg (1986) answers this question in his triangular theory of love. This theory holds that love can be understood in terms of three components that form the vertices of a triangle: intimacy, passion, and decision/commitment.

According to Sternberg (1986), the intimacy component refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in love relationships, i.e., those feelings that essentially give the experience of warmth in a loving relationship. The passion component refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, and sexual consumption. This component, therefore, includes those sources of motivation and other forms of arousal that lead to the experience of passion in a love relationship. The decision/commitment component includes the cognitive elements in deciding on the existence and potential long-term commitment to a love relationship.

Each of these components has its developmental trajectory related to the length of the relationship (Sternberg, 1986). However, the commitment development trajectory is the most interesting given this dissertation topic. It is shown below in Figure 6. The course of the decision/commitment component of love during a close relationship depends mainly on the relationship's success. Generally, the level starts at zero before meeting or getting to know a partner and then increases. Typically, if the relationship is to become long-lasting, the increase in the level of commitment in the decision/engagement component will be gradual at first and then accelerate. If the relationship lasts for a long time, the level of commitment will generally stabilize, giving an S-shaped curve. In contrast, if the relationship begins to weaken, the level of commitment will begin a period of decline. If the relationship fails and breaks down, the level of commitment will return to the baseline.

To sum up, as Sternberg (1986) notes, the smoothness of the hypothetical curve does not consider all the factors that undoubtedly influence partners' decisions and commitments. Even the most successful relationships will have ups and downs, and the commitment curve will vary accordingly. However, the relationship decision/commitment curves shown in Figure 6 can provide a starting point for further research and analysis.

Figure 6

The course of decision/commitment as a function of duration relationship (Sternberg, 1986,

p. 127)



1.3.2.5 The Effect of Gender and Types of Romantic Unions on Commitment

Who is more committed in a romantic relationship, women or men? Are there differences in the level of commitment to various types of romantic relationships? Theory and research on gender differences show that marriage is accompanied by essential transformations in men's lives regarding identity, social networks, and responsible behavior (Nock, 1998; Stanley et al., 2002). It may be thought that they prompt that, at least at earlier ages and stages of relationships, men may be more resistant to commitment than women (Stanley et al., 2004; Whitehead & Popenoe, 2002). Men and women may also perceive and experience commitment differently, e.g., during cohabitation. For example, women may be more likely than men to interpret cohabitation as a step toward marriage or a sign of increased commitment (Rhoades et al., 2006). Stanley et al. (2004) found that married men who had cohabited premaritally with their spouse were less dedicated (interpersonal commitment) than men who had not. There was, therefore, no significant difference in dedication for women based on premarital cohabitation history. In the longitudinal studies, Rhoades et al. (2006) examined couples' dedication levels based on their premarital cohabitation history. They found that gender moderated the link between premarital cohabitation history and the level of dedication between spouses both before marriage and during the early years of marriage. Similar to the results of Stanley et al. (2004), men who cohabited before engagement were also less dedicated than men who had not cohabited before engagement.

Kline et al. (2004) examined the timing of cohabitation concerning when couples became engaged. They found that couples who had recently married and began cohabiting before getting engaged had lower relationship quality and more negative marital interactions than those who cohabited only after getting or married. Janicka and Szymczak (2019) analyzed the difference in commitment (using a Polish adaptation of Stanley and Markman's commitment model) between marriages and cohabitation couples in Poland. They found that marriages tend to portend better than cohabitation. The married couples regarded their relationship as more important than the cohabitants. That effect was also observed between married vs cohabiting men and women. On the other hand, Brown and Booth (1996) and Brown (2004) found no significant differences in relationship quality between married and cohabiting couples who reported specific plans to marry or believed they would eventually marry their partner.

In conclusion, the research shows that men are generally less engaged in romantic relationships than women, especially in cohabitation before engagement or marriage. However, various psychological factors may impact commitment to a relationship. The most important of these will be presented below.

1.3.2.6 Predictors of Romantic Relationship Commitment

Many psychological factors determine commitment to a relationship/marriage. According to Rusbult's (1980) investment model, there are satisfaction levels, quality of alternatives, and investment size. A meta-analysis by Le and Agnew (2003), which included data from 52 studies (including 60 independent samples and more than 11,000 participants), found that the average correlations between investment model constructs were quite strong. The satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size were strongly correlated with commitment (r = .68, -.48, .46, respectively). The correlation between satisfaction and commitment was significantly more potent than the alternatives-commitment and investments-commitment correlations. In addition, similar to the correlational analyses, regression analysis showed that satisfaction was the strongest predictor of commitment ($\beta = .510$), while alternatives and investments had similar absolute magnitudes ($\beta = -.217$ and .240, respectively).

The investment model also suggests that a feeling of commitment emerges because of investment (Rusbult, 1980, 1983). According to researchers (Whitton et al., 2002; Stanley, 1998), sacrifice can be considered an investment in the relationship that should predict subsequent commitment. Van Lange et al. (1997, p. 1377) said, "An act of sacrifice may be experienced as an investment in one's relationship, which in turn may strengthen feelings of commitment." Kelley (1979) added that sacrifices might build commitment because, according to interdependence

theory, for stable relationships to continue, certain prosocial maintenance behaviors, such as sacrificing for the good of the partner and the relationship, should occur. In their research, Wieselquist et al. (1999) demonstrated that sacrifice increases trust between partners, fostering commitment and reciprocation of more sacrifice. Stanley et al. (2006) indicated that satisfaction with sacrifice in early marriage is associated with global relationship quality in the long term. Moreover, satisfaction with sacrifice was a better predictor of future marital adjustment than early marital adjustment.

Stanley et al. (1999) emphasized that romantic attachment also plays a vital role in predicting commitment. They said, "We believe that commitment develops in the first place in response to anxiety about losing the partner that one has become so attached to during the dating process. Commitment reassures two attached partners that each will be there for the other into the future (Stanley et al., 1999, p. 388)."

Karyadeva (2020), in her doctoral dissertation entitled "The Relationship Between Sanctification of Marriage and Commitment in the Context of Monogamous Heterosexual Marriage Relationships," analyzed the associations between marriage sanctification (theistic and non-theistic; Mahoney, 2013) and relationship commitment (dedication and constraint; Stanley & Markman, 1992). She gathered data from 133 individuals in monogamous heterosexual marriage relationships. Results showed that the higher the perception that one's marriage has perceived sacred qualities (non-theistic sanctification), the higher the dedication dimension commitment. However, that perception was not significantly related to the constraint commitment. Additionally, the higher the perception that one's marriage has a connection to a higher power (theistic sanctification), the higher the dedication and the constraint commitment. In the regression analyses, after accounting for personality, religiosity, and spirituality, the perception that one's marriage has sacred qualities (non-theistic sanctification) and is connected to a higher power (theistic sanctification) significantly predicted dedication but not to constraint commitment. Gender was not a significant moderator of the relationship between theistic or non-theistic sanctification and dedication or constraint commitment, considering the covariates such as personality, religiosity, and spirituality. While Karyadeva's study is essential and sheds light on the relationship between marriage sanctification and commitment, it has some limitations. First, the sample was relatively small (133 individuals, 76% women). The author did not include both partners from different types of romantic relationships (e.g., cohabitations). Second, the study was cross-sectional; only correlational and regression analyses were conducted. Third, it was conducted in the specific socio-cultural context of the U.S.

To summarize, relationship/marriage commitment is described in various theories (Johnson, 1978, 1982; Levinger, 1965, 1979; Rusbult et al., 1998; Stanley & Markman, 1992). Each of them emphasizes different components or dynamics of commitment. In the presented study, I included the commitment proposed by Rusbult et al. (1998) in the investment model. Moreover, many socio-demographic and psychological factors predict commitment to a relationship/marriage. One of them that deserves special attention is sacrifice.

1.4 Sacrifice in Romantic Relationships

Conflicts sometimes arise in romantic unions. These range from disagreements over where to go for dinner to whose family to visit for Christmas. Researchers indicate that conflicts can increase stress and decrease relationship satisfaction and commitment (Righetti et al., 2020; Zoppolat et al., 2020). One effective way to resolve these situations is to sacrifice one's preferences for the partner's and the relationship's sake (Van Lange et al., 1997).

Generally, sacrifice is understood as giving up one's desires for the benefit of another person (Righetti et al., 2020). Sacrifice is necessary and inevitable in any romantic relationship, although sometimes partners may willingly or unwillingly engage in sacrificial behavior. Noller (1996) emphasized that people identify sacrifice, care, trust, respect, and loyalty as part of their conception of "love." Numerous findings from the altruism literature indicate that the closer a person is related to another, the more likely that person is to give up something to help the other person (e.g., Bar-Tal, 1976; Killen & Turiel, 1998).

Researchers also consider sacrifice as a particular type of pro-social behavior because it involves giving up a personal goal or preference for the sake of a partner or relationship (Day & Impett, 2016; Righetti et al., 2020; Van Lange et al., 1997). Thus, sacrifice is defined as giving up one's immediate self-interest to promote a partner's or relationship's well-being (Day & Impett, 2016; Van Lange et al., 1997). As Day and Impett (2016) noted, sacrifice differs from simply providing help and support to another person because it involves providing benefits while subordinating a personal goal.

Scholars studying sacrifice in the context of romantic unions distinguished four sacrifice facets: (1) willingness to sacrifice, (2) behavioral sacrifice, (3) costs of sacrifice, and (4) satisfaction with sacrifice (Righetti et al., 2020; Stanley et al., 2006; Visserman et al., 2021).

Willingness to sacrifice is defined by Van Lange et al. (1997, p. 1374) "as the propensity to forego immediate self-interest to promote the well-being of a partner or relationship." This understanding of sacrifice has been framed around the theory of interdependence, which emphasizes that an individual's motivation is transformed from self-interest to relationship interest

as interdependence increases (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Therefore, Van Lange et al. (1997) proposed that an individual who has undergone this transformation of motivation is more willing to give up self-interest in favor of what is best for the relationship. Their study showed that self-reported willingness to sacrifice was positively associated with more substantial overall commitment, healthier couple functioning, and greater relationship satisfaction. In a series of mediation analyses, Wieselquist et al. (1999) demonstrated that an individual's willingness to sacrifice increased his or her partner's trust, which led to more outstanding relationship commitment and willingness to sacrifice on the partner's part.

Behavioral sacrifice refers to whether a manifestation of sacrifice has occurred in a relationship (Impett et al., 2005; Ruppel & Curran, 2012; Visserman et al., 2017). Some researchers (Righetti et al., 2020; Van Lange et al., 1997) claimed that willingness to sacrifice and behavioral sacrifices may only sometimes correspond. Although, e.g., the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985) proposes that intentions should predict behavior, several meta-analyses have shown that the connection between intentions and behavior is weak (e.g., Armitage & Conner, 2001; Milne et al., 2000). This is because many other factors, such as habits, individual control, and situation characteristics, can interfere with implementing intentions (Carrington et al., 2010; Webb & Sheeran, 2006). In addition, according to Auger and Deviney (2007), ratings of intentions are more colored by socially proffered responses than actual behavior. Righetti et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analytical correlation between the willingness to sacrifice and behavioral sacrifice and revealed only a small to medium association (r = .23, 95% CI [.121, .339]).

Costs of sacrifice represent the perception of the extent of costs that sacrifice has entailed for oneself (Visserman et al., 2021; Whitton et al., 2007). According to the transactive theory of goal dynamics (Fitzsimons et al., 2015), these costs might be especially burdensome to the extent that they strongly interfere with personal goals. For example, Visserman et al. (2021) showed that feeling that sacrifices are more costly is associated with lower relationship satisfaction, commitment, and personal well-being.

Stanley and Markman (1992, p. 596) describe satisfaction with sacrifice as "the degree to which people feel a sense of satisfaction in doing things that are largely or solely for their partners' benefit." Many studies have shown that satisfaction with sacrifice is positively associated with global relationship quality and commitment (Stanley & Markman, 1992; Stanley et al., 2006; Whitton et al., 2007).

Given the four assessments, these constructs may have various associations with relationship/marriage outcomes. For instance, while being motivated to perform pro-social behavior for one's partner may have many benefits, enacting behavioral sacrifice and facing its

concrete and emotional costs can hurt the relationship. Likewise, while satisfaction with sacrifice can be positively related to personal and partner's well-being, the perception of its costs can harm partners and the marriage. For this reason, both sides of the sacrifice will be presented below.

1.4.1 Research on Sacrifice in Romantic Relationships

Sacrifices occur in situations of divergent interests between partners (Van Lange et al., 1997). While some sacrifices may be necessary to maintain a relationship, partners often face the dilemma of whether to give up their personal goals or pursue them without a partner, with unknown consequences for themselves and their relationship.

Theories of relationship sacrifice do not give a clear picture of its association with personal and relationship well-being. For instance, according to interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978), partners in a situation of goal divergence may adopt their partner's point of view and choose to give up their preferences for their sake or the relationship. In that case, sacrifice promotes reciprocal trust and cooperation in relationships and is linked to positive outcomes (e.g., Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Van Lange et al., 1997). Moreover, when a partner perceives acts of sacrifice, they may believe they will be reciprocated (Wieselquist et al., 1999), thus creating a climate of trust and cooperation in the relationship (Van Lange et al., 1997). On the other hand, as Fitzsimons et al. (2015) suggested in the transactive goal dynamics theory, people may develop negative affect toward their partner after sacrificing because their goal-pursuit activities have been obstructed by their partner. Hence, different theoretical accounts and empirical studies support two predictions about the link between sacrifice and various relationship outcomes: one that is positive and the other that is negative (Righetti et al., 2020). The following will present the results of studies, first presenting the positive and then the negative aspects of sacrifice.

1.4.1.1 The Positive Side of Sacrifice

Generally, researchers have shown that positive attitudes toward sacrifice, including willingness to sacrifice and satisfaction with sacrifice, demonstrated positive connections with relationship quality (Stanley & Markman, 1992; Van Lange et al., 1997; Whitton et al., 2002). For example, Van Lange et al. (1992) indicated that people more willing to sacrifice for their romantic partner report greater relationship satisfaction and are less likely to break up. When people perceive that their partner is willing to sacrifice their self-interest, they experience increased commitment and trust in their partner's responsiveness (Joel et al., 2013; Wieselquist et al., 1999).

Studies have also shown that if partners feel authentic in their sacrifices, they experience increased positive emotions and relationship satisfaction (Impett & Gordon, 2008; Impett et al.,

2014). In contrast, suppression of negative emotions has been found to have negative consequences for satisfaction with sacrifice. Righetii et al. (2016) found that participants who experienced lower levels of trust in their romantic partner were more likely to suppress negative emotions during sacrifice, leading to lower satisfaction. Moreover, positive sentiments about sacrifice indicate placing the marriage above individual self-interest (Whitton et al., 2007), which could be consistent with the idea of sanctity (the psycho-spiritual process of sanctification) protecting marriage (Mahoney, 2013).

Some studies have analyzed the motivational factors underlying sacrifice behavior. Two factors (Gable & Regs, 2001; Impett et al., 2005) have been identified: approaching or avoidance. In sacrificial behavior motivated by approach goals, individuals expect positive relational outcomes, such as making their partner happy or deepening the relationship due to their behavior. In sacrificial behaviors motivated by avoidance goals, individuals seek to avoid negative consequences, such as relationship conflicts or lack of interest in their partner. Totenhagen et al. (2013) pointed out that actively sacrificing or being willing to sacrifice usually results in a good relationship and allows partners to reap positive benefits. However, negative relational outcomes can occur when partners hide their authentic selves and engage in passive self-sacrificing behavior without paying attention to their concerns, wants, and needs (Stanley & Markman, 1992).

1.4.1.2 The Negative Side of Sacrifice

Despite existing theoretical and empirical support for the idea that sacrifice benefits relationships and personal well-being, some researchers and their studies suggest that sacrifice could also be associated with a lower commitment, relationship functioning, and personal well-being (e.g., Righetti et al., 2020; Totenhagen & Curran, 2011; Whitton et al., 2007; Young & Curran, 2016). Impett et al. (2012, as cited in Righetti et al., 2020) showed that when people suppress their emotions and make sacrifices for their romantic partner, they feel that their sacrifices are not a reflection of their authentic self, and in turn, the quality of their relationship declines. They experience a decline in their well-being.

In the transactive goal dynamics theory, Fitzsimons et al. (2015) pointed out that relationship partners' goals are intertwined and can be characterized as one system. Suppose individuals fail to achieve their goals due to involvement with their partner (i.e., goals they would have achieved independently without being in a relationship). In that case, they may experience what is known as transactive loss, which can impair relationship well-being. For example, when people cannot achieve personal goals, they often experience frustration and negative affect (e.g., Brunstein, 1996), which in turn can negatively affect personal well-being (e.g., Fincham & Beach,

1999), leading to more destructive behavior in their relationships (e.g., Karney & Bradbury, 1997). In addition, by sacrificing, people realize that they cannot pursue their preferences and goals because of their partner, making them feel less close, less satisfied, and less motivated to get closer to their partner (e.g., Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008).

In addition, people making sacrifices incur certain costs in the relationship that the partner may not even recognize or appreciate. A study by Visserman et al. (2017) showed that partners recognize only about half of the daily sacrifices made by the other partner. This causes the person who made the sacrifice to feel unappreciated (Righetti et al., 2020), harming their well-being (Righetti & Visserman, 2018). As a result, such individuals may feel they are being taken advantage of by their partners (Righetti et al., 2020).

1.4.2 Dyadic Effects of Sacrifice

The reported empirical findings indicate that sacrifice can predict positive and negative relationship outcomes. However, in contrast to the larger body of empirical research that has examined the relationship between individuals' self-sacrifice and their personal and relationship outcomes, very few studies have looked at partner effects, that is, the impact on the recipient of the sacrifice. These studies have found that receiving sacrifice is positively related (Chen & Li, 2007; Wieselquist et al., 1999; Visserman et al., 2017) or unrelated (Ruppel & Curran, 2012; Totenhagen et al., 2013) to relationship quality.

When people receive a sacrifice, they feel that the partner has their best interests in mind, is committed to the relationship, and is willing to pay certain costs to be together (Joel et al., 2013; Wieselquist et al., 1999). They often feel greater trust in their partner (Wieselquist et al., 1999) and gratitude (Visserman et al., 2017), which in turn generally increases the quality and stability of their relationship (Algoe et al., 2010). In some studies, the partner effect was not revealed. The lack of partner effects may be because partner effects tend to be smaller than actor effects and, therefore, more difficult to detect (Orth, 2013). Partners may not experience many of the positive effects of receiving sacrifices because, for example, they do not detect them (in fact, half of daily sacrifices are overlooked; Visserman et al., 2017), receiving sacrifices can be costly (Righetti & Impett, 2017), they sometimes prefer an arrangement in which each partner pursues their own goals independently of the other (Righetti et al., 2020), or these behaviors might be influenced by gender role (Zoppolat et al., 2020).

1.4.3 Gender Differences in Sacrifice

Who sacrifices more in a romantic relationship, men or women? Considering gender norms, we might expect women to invest more in their relationships than men (Miller, 1986; Wood, 1993). As a result, women may make more frequent or incredible sacrifices than men (Ahmed & Shaheen, 2013) and incur higher costs, which can breed resentment and frustration over time (Whitton et al., 2007). This negative effect can be exacerbated if men do not reciprocate their sacrifices (Hatfield et al., 1979). Zoppolat et al. (2020) noted that even in relatively balanced or equitable relationships in which partners make similar sacrifices, women may receive less appreciation and gratitude from their partners than men.

Lerner (1988), building on the literature suggesting that women derive more of their selfworth from their relationships' success than men (Gilligan, 1982), suggested that some women feel they must make sacrifices to maintain their relationships. However, when a woman sacrifices excessively, she may experience a sense of loss that will increase her vulnerability to depression. Similarly, Jack's (1991) model of female depression assumes that many women have schemas of how a woman should behave in relationships, that is, that the needs of others should be put before their own needs. According to Jack (1991), women based on this schema may engage in prolonged and repeated self-denial, which contributes to a loss of self-esteem, thereby increasing the risk of depression.

To sum up, it should be noted that women may feel less favorable about making sacrifices because they incur more costs and receive fewer benefits, such as recognition from their partner and society for prioritizing relationship goals over personal goals.

1.4.4 Sacrifice and Religion

D. Weddle (2017), in his book "Sacrifice in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam," points out that religious sacrifice is "a costly act of self-giving, in denial of natural inclinations, that is offered in suspense, under conditions that threaten failure, to establish a relation with transcendent reality" (p. 22) and is omnipresent in the world's major religions. In Judaism, the chapters of the Hebrew Bible read in synagogues contain instructions for offering sacrifices. Christians celebrate Jesus' death as a sacrifice for sins at Roman Catholic masses and in Passion plays in Protestant churches. Muslims kill animals every year in obedience to a divine command. These religions also emphasize forms of self-sacrifice, such as abandoning ordinary desires, giving up precious possessions, or giving up one's very life. Moreover, each tradition demands sacrifice from its adherents to ensure a relationship with the sacred or transcendence.

In Judaism, Orthodox Jews must follow many commandments and prohibitions, such as daily services, dietary regulations (kashrut), traditional prayers and ceremonies, regular and intensive Torah study, and separating men and women in the synagogue (Ravitzky, 2007). Self-sacrifice is also essential in marriage. In traditional Judaism, a woman's primary role is being a wife, mother, and home caretaker. The spiritual influence a woman has on her family is also emphasized. The Talmud says that when a pious man marries a wicked woman, the man becomes wicked, but when a wicked man marries a pious woman, the man becomes pious (Greenberg, 1985).

Christians believe that Jesus' crucifixion was the ultimate sacrifice, making possible the redemption of the world. Through their sacrifices, they identify with Christ in his revelation of divine love for humanity. The Apostle Paul placed sacrifice at the center of the Christian faith, practice, and life, "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:19–20). Furthermore, Apostle Paul underlines the role and meaning of sacrifice in marriage life:

"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing[a] her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (Ephesians 5:22-28)"

It is also worth noting that for Christians, marriage will take on the role of a sacrament and is a relationship sanctified by God. For this reason, the Church teaches the believers that spouses should sacrifice for themselves and try to protect their union ("Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate," Mark 10:9).

As in the Jewish and Christian traditions, sacrifice in Islam also means a literal offering and an inner gift of devotion and gratitude (Weddle, 2017). Muhammad preaches that the bodies of sacrificed animals do not affect Allah; only human devotion to the divine will evokes Allah's compassion and mercy ("Pray to your Lord and sacrifice to him," Quran 108.1). Allah said, "Marriage is my precept and my practice. Those who do not follow my practice are not of me," and commands the believers to marry. In marriage, men and women have specific roles, which should be based on mutual care, sacrifice, and cooperation ("They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them...," Quran, 2:188).

Thus, the dimension of sacrifice is present in many world religions. It includes both the aspect of making sacrifices and giving up valuable goods, giving up one's own life. This dimension

is also present in family and marital life, where spouses, accepting the doctrine of their faith (e.g., seeing marriage as sacred and fulfilling the presence of God/Allah), should perform specific roles, be willing to make sacrifices, and take care of their relationship.

To summarize, sacrifice is understood as giving up one's desires for the benefit of another person (Righetti et al., 2020) and is necessary and inevitable in any romantic relationship. Scholars studying sacrifice in the context of romantic unions distinguished four sacrifice facets: willingness to sacrifice, behavioral sacrifice, costs of sacrifice, and satisfaction with sacrifice (Righetti et al., 2020; Stanley et al., 2006; Visserman et al., 2020) and showed their positive and negative associations with various relationship outcomes (e.g., Stanley & Markman, 1992; Van Lange et al., 1997; Whitton et al., 2007).

Although many studies have already been conducted on the self-sacrifice of partners in a relationship, the results still give a vague picture of the role and importance of this constrict in married life. In addition, most studies on sacrifice have been conducted using cross-sectional designs and have not considered the dimension of spouses' religiosity/spirituality, especially the psychospiritual process of sanctification. However, it should be hypothesized that sacrifice is equally, if not more strongly, prospectively related to long-term couple outcomes (Whitton et al., 2007). This hypothesis has not yet been adequately tested. For these reasons, in this dissertation, I decided to include one dimension of sacrifice, i.e., satisfaction with sacrifice (defined by Stanley and Markman (1992, p. 596) as "the degree to which people feel a sense of satisfaction in doing things that are largely or solely for their partners' benefit,") treat it as a potential mediator in associations between sanctification of relationship and relationship quality.

In conclusion, Chapter I describes the theoretical background of the study presented. Initially, the Relational Spirituality Framework was introduced, paying particular attention to the psychospiritual process of sanctifying relationships/marriage. Then, relationship quality, operationalized on the intrapersonal dimension as satisfaction with the relationship and the interpersonal dimension as the commitment to the relationship, was discussed. Finally, the various facets of sacrifice, particularly satisfaction with sacrifice, were described in romantic union life. Chapter II will address the aims, research questions, hypotheses, and model tested in the present study.

Chapter II The Present Study

This chapter describes the present study. It consists of three paragraphs. The first shows the meaning, theoretical background, and research questions. The second contains research aims and models. The final included research hypotheses.

2.1 Theoretical Background and Research Questions

Humans are social beings and have formed relationships with others for centuries, such as neighborhoods, families, or romantic unions. How these relationships are created, sustained, and transformed depends on various factors, e.g., political, social, economic, or religious influences. Currently, we can observe numerous sociocultural changes around the world and in Poland, indicating a significant increase in the number of divorces, separated individuals, and single parents and a rise in informal relationships (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020; Szukalski, 2020). Generally, there has been a deepening crisis in creating, forming, and maintaining romantic relationships.

Because of those researchers (e.g., Hawkins et al., 2012; Paprzycka et al., 2021; Parker et al., 2022), on the one hand, look for the causes of this phenomenon and point to ideological, economic, or cultural factors. On the other hand, they search for predictors and models that could help support romantic relationships and marriages. One is the Relational Spirituality Framework Professor Annette Mahoney from Bowling Green State University (Ohio, USA) proposed.

The Relational Spirituality Framework (Mahoney, 2013) demonstrates how religious/spiritual variables can be linked to various romantic relationship outcomes. The RFS is built on a well-established and comprehensive theory asserting that religion and spirituality are multidimensional constructs and multilevel phenomena comprising numerous thoughts, feelings, actions, experiences, relationships, and psychological responses (Pargament et al., 2013). The RSF delineates three recursive stages in the development of romantic relationships: (1) discovery, (2) maintaining, and (3) transforming, and three levels of mechanisms operating in these stages: (1) individual relationships with the divine/God, (2) perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, and (3) family members' relationships with the religious/spiritual community.

The presented study is based on the second stage of developing romantic relationships, i.e., the maintenance stage. It considers the second mechanism, i.e., the perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, which is related to the process of sanctification of the romantic relationship (Mahoney, 2013). Sanctification of a relationship indicates to what extent partners think that their relationship is a manifestation of God (theistic sanctification) and/or is marked by sacred qualities (non-theistic sanctification; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013). Researchers (e.g., Mahoney et al., 1999; Phillips et al., 2017) showed that partners being in various romantic unions (i.e., heterosexual, homosexual, or cohabiting couples) often perceive their relationship/marriage as a part of God's plan and/or give it sacred qualities, e.g., they think their relationship is holy.

Mahoney et al. (2023) indicated that various religious/spiritual factors, especially the sanctification of romantic relationships (independent variable in the presented study), are significantly associated with the quality of romantic relationship life, which can be expressed in intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions (Reynolds et al., 2014). Therefore, I chose to describe the quality of romantic relationships (dependent variable) in this way: intrapersonal as romantic relationship satisfaction and interpersonal as romantic relationship commitment. I then adopted Hendrick's (1988, p. 10) definition of relationship satisfaction as "the measurement of a person's feelings and thoughts about their marriage or similar intimate relationship, including a long-term orientation toward involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment to it (e.g., a sense of "wellness"; Rusbult et al., 1998, pp. 359-360)".

Many studies (e.g., Kusner et al., 2014; Mahoney et al., 2021; Mahoney et al., 2023) show that the sanctification of romantic relationships is an essential predictor of the quality of romantic unions. For instance, Stanford et al. (2014) indicated that sanctification was positively related to satisfaction with marriage and negatively to dissatisfaction with the relationship. Kusner et al. (2014) pointed out that spouses who viewed their relationship as more sacred had better problemsolving skills, especially as they prepared for parenthood themselves. In a meta-analytic study, Mahoney et al. (2021) found that greater sanctification of various types of close relationships was associated with more positive relational adjustment and lower rates of relational problems.

However, most of this research was tested in groups of Christians (especially Protestants) in the United States (Dew et al., 2020; Mahoney et al., 2021) and, therefore, in a cultural, social, spiritual, and religious context different from that in Poland. In Polish research, the psychospiritual process of sanctification of a romantic relationship has not yet been of particular interest to researchers. We still need to find out whether, or if so, what role the sanctification of romantic relationships among Polish couples will play. Thus, this area offers many opportunities for new research questions, creating new hypotheses, empirical exploration, and comparing the results. Hence, in the presented research, I ask:

Question 1: What are the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship and its quality (operationalized as satisfaction and commitment to the romantic relationship) among Polish couples?

In the research, it is also worth going a step further and looking for possible mechanisms to explain how the sanctification of a romantic relationship could be related to its quality (satisfaction and commitment). For example, Dew et al. (2020) examined the associations between marital sanctification, joint religious activities in the home, joint worship service attendance, and sexual satisfaction. They also searched for potential mediators of these associations. Results showed that marital sanctification was positively associated with wives' and husbands' sexual satisfaction. Marital commitment, relationship maintenance behaviors, and spousal time mediated these associations for husbands, while commitment mediated the association for wives.

Another potential mediator that might help to explain these associations could be the ability to give up one's desires, i.e., sacrifice. Conflicts often arise in romantic relationships. These range from disagreements over where to go for dinner to whose family to visit for Christmas. Researchers indicate that these conflicts can increase stress and decrease relationship satisfaction and commitment (e.g., Righetti et al., 2020; Zoppolat et al., 2020). One effective way to resolve these situations is to sacrifice one's preferences for the sake of the partner and the relationship (Van Lange et al., 1997). In this context, Stanley and Markman (1992, p. 596) pointed out satisfaction with sacrifice, which is "the degree to which people feel a sense of satisfaction in doing things that are largely or solely for their partners' benefit." Many studies have shown that this type of sacrifice is positively associated with global relationship quality and commitment (Stanley & Markman, 1992; Stanley et al., 2006; Whitton et al., 2007) and might be influenced by religion (Weddle, 2017). It, therefore, seems particularly interesting to examine what role satisfaction with sacrifice plays among Polish couples, especially because, up to date, there is no such research in Poland. Thus, in the presented study, I would like to assess the role of satisfaction with sacrifice and ask:

Question 2: Is satisfaction with sacrifice a significant mediator in associations between the sanctification of a romantic relationship and its quality (operationalized as satisfaction and commitment to the romantic relationship)?

Pargament and Mahoney (2005) underline that the sanctification of a romantic relationship is a "psychospiritual" construct. It is spiritual because of its reference point - sacred matters (i.e., marriage, romantic union). It is also a psychological process through which partners give divine
and significant meaning to their relationships (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). Sanctification, as a "psychospiritual" construct and psychological process, might be present, activated, and developed under various life situations, e.g., when partners consider getting married, having a wedding anniversary, or having offspring. In such moments, sanctification can work in the "here and now," increasing, e.g., relationship satisfaction, and in the long term, when it can motivate partners to nurture their relationships, protect, and sacrifice for them.

In addition, as Mahoney et al. (2023) noted, sanctification should be studied from a temporal perspective (i.e., "here and now" and long term) because whereas significant cross-sectional links exist between r/s and marital quality or stability (e.g., Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Latifa & Amelia, 2018; Latifa et al., 2021), longitudinal studies have often yielded inconsistent or null findings (e.g., Cutrona et al., 2011; Brown et al., 2008; Sullivan, 2001). Because of that, researchers in their studies should focus on specific r/s factors rather than global ones and try to use both approaches (Mahoney et al., 2023). For example, by comparing cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence, we could show a more complex and detailed picture of the role of the romantic relationship's sanctification in its quality. There is a lack of thorough research in this context, especially in Polish research. Thus, in the presented study, I ask:

Question 3: What are the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship and its quality (operationalized as satisfaction and commitment to the romantic relationship) and satisfaction with sacrifice among Polish couples in the "here and now" and long-term perspective (i.e., in the cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches)?

Researchers (e.g., Brown et al., 2015; Bühler et al., 2021; Rhoades et al., 2006) have shown that perception of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in romantic relationships might differ due to various sociodemographic factors, e.g., gender, age, religiosity, type of relationship, or relationship duration. For example, Bühler et al. (2021) demonstrated that relationship satisfaction is strongly linked and depends on age and relationship duration. Some studies have found that women are generally less satisfied with their marriages than men (Brown et al., 2015; Dush et al., 2008; Van Laningham et al., 2001), and married couples seem more satisfied with their relationships than unmarried cohabiters or re-parented couples (Jose et al., 2010; Reynolds et al., 2014). Men are usually less engaged in romantic relationships than women, especially in cohabitation before engagement or marriage (Rhoades et al., 2006; Stanley et al., 2004). Women, in turn, may feel less favorable about making sacrifices because they incur more costs and receive fewer benefits (Zoppolat et al., 2020). In addition, researchers (e.g., Mahoney et

al., 1999; Phillips et al., 2017) showed that partners being in various unions (i.e., heterosexual, homosexual, or cohabiting couples) often sanctify their relationships. To date, there is a lack of studies showing how partners' various sociodemographic characteristics, such as age, education, religiosity, or relationship duration, might relate to the perceived sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice of their romantic unions. Thus, I ask:

Question 4: How are different sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., age, education, religiosity, etc.) related to perceived sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in romantic relationships? Are there significant differences?

2.2 Research Aims and Models

The presented project aims to answer the above four research questions. First, the project examines the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship and its quality in Polish couples. Second, it analyzes the potential mechanism of these associations and includes the satisfaction with sacrifice as a possible mediator. Third, the analysis will be conducted using cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches and take into consideration data from both partners in the relationship. Fourth, the project shows how different sociodemographics are related to the perception by partners of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in their romantic relationships.

The study is based on the second stage of RSF, i.e., the maintenance stage. Mahoney (2010, 2013) in the RFS did not indicate thoroughly when the maintenance stage begins and ends. Many researchers (e.g., Anderson et al., 1983; Markey, 2015; Stafford & Canary, 1991; Ogolsky & Stafford, 2023; Wojciszke, 2012) point out that this stage strongly depends on partners' behaviors and types of relationships. For example, Stafford and Canary (1991) distinguished five key behaviors that maintain a relationship: (1) positive communication with partners in a happy and supportive manner, (2) openness in relationship communication, (3) assurances which are words that emphasize partners' commitment to each other for the duration of the relationship, (4) networking with family and friends, and (5) sharing tasks and household responsibilities. They also noticed that married, engaged, and seriously dating partners saw more use of assurances and sharing tasks than those who had just begun dating (Stafford & Canary, 1991). In addition, including Bühler et al. (2021) and Sternberg (1986) trajectory of developing romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment as well as the statistical data on Polish couples (CSO, 2019; 2022; PORC, 2019), I decided to include in my studies couples who have been together for at least 3 years and in case of marriages are after the wedding ceremony. During this relationship, behaviors

that maintain partners should strongly appear, as Stafford and Canary (1999) described, and greater trust in partners for each other and offspring strengthens their romantic union.

The presented study will analyze the associations (i.e., direct and indirect) between the sanctification of a romantic relationship (independent variable), romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment (dependent variables), and satisfaction with sacrifice (mediator), including dyadic data (i.e., from women and men) of Polish couples. The direct effects of the dyads approach (e.g., the actor effect on women's sanctification of romantic relationships on women's romantic relationship satisfaction) will be tested in the Actor–Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) and the indirect effects (e.g., the actor effect on women's sanctification of romantic relationship satisfaction through women's satisfaction with sacrifice) in the Actor–Partner Interdependence Extended Mediation Model (APIMeM; Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011).

Thus, two general models will be tested. Model 1 assesses direct (APIM; Figure 7. A) and indirect (APIMeM; Figure 7. B) associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships and romantic relationship satisfaction and the mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice. Model 2 assesses direct (APIM; Figure 8. A) and indirect (APIMeM; Figure 8. B) associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships and romantic relationship commitment and the mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice.

Figure 7

Model 1 Presented Direct (A) and Indirect (B) Associations Between the Sanctification of Romantic Relationships and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction and the Mediating Role of Satisfaction with Sacrifice



Figure 8

Model 2 Presented Direct (A) and Indirect (B) Associations Between the Sanctification of Romantic Relationships and Romantic Relationship Commitment and the Mediating Role of Satisfaction with Sacrifice



Considering Mahoney et al. (2023) findings that the cross-sectional and longitudinal studies show various results in associations between r/s and relationship quality, and Jose's (2016) and Haye's (2022) suggestions that mediation analyses, including the APIMeM models, should be tested using the longitudinal approach to obtain clear and unambiguous mediation results, I decided to analyze the above Models 1 and 2 (Figures 7 and 8) in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches that include the three-time intervals: Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3.

A literature review showed that longitudinal studies on romantic relationships analyze r/s, satisfaction, stability, quality, forgiveness, and sacrifice most often at intervals from 3 to 12 months (e.g., Cao et al., 2016; He et al., 2018; Lavner et al., 2018; Rose et al., 2018). Furthermore, including Bühler et al. (2021) and Sternberg (1986) trajectory of developing romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment as well as the statistical data on Polish couples (CSO, 2019; 2022; PORC, 2019), I decided to adopt 3-month time intervals between measurements. All tested variables will be measured three times: in Time 1, after 3 months in Time 2, and after the next 3

months in Time 3. Then, it will be tested in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches in Models 1 and 2.

2.3 Research Hypotheses

In Model 1, I will analyze the direct and indirect associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships (independent variable) and romantic relationship satisfaction (dependent variable) and the mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice (Figure 7) in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

Relationship satisfaction is a subjective assessment of the "goodness" or "badness" of a romantic union (Gable & Poore, 2008). Hendrick (1988) pointed out that relationship satisfaction describes a person's feelings and thoughts about their intimate union. Researchers (e.g., Lakatos & Martos, 2019; Mahoney, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2023) have confirmed that the sanctification of a romantic relationship can significantly predict relationship satisfaction. For example, Stanford et al. (2014) indicated that sanctification was positively related to romantic relationship satisfaction. The sanctification negatively correlated with marital infidelity in a sample of couples living in Teheran (Rayesh & Kalantar, 2018). Wives' perceived relationships as sacred were significantly and positively linked to marital satisfaction for both spouses (Sabey et al., 2014). Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al. (2024) also found that the sanctification of romantic relationships positively correlated with the quality of the relationship. However, their analyses were conducted in a sample of Polish married and cohabiting individuals, not couples.

Satisfaction with sacrifice, described by Stanley and Markman (1992, p. 596) as "the degree to which people feel a sense of satisfaction in doing things that are largely or solely for their partners' benefit," can also be an essential predictor for relationship satisfaction (Stanley & Markman, 1992; Stanley et al., 2006; Whitton et al., 2007). Studies have also shown that if partners feel authentic in their sacrifices, they experience increased positive emotions and relationship satisfaction (Impett et al., 2014; Impett & Gordon, 2008). Furthermore, the dimension of sacrifice is present in many religions, where spouses, accepting the doctrine of their faith (e.g., seeing marriage as sacred and filled with the presence of God/Allah), are expected to fulfill specific roles, be ready to make sacrifices and take care of their relationship satisfaction and commitment.

Researchers (e.g., Brown et al., 2015; Joel et al., 2013; Bühler et al., 2021) have also underlined that these associations between sanctification, sacrifice, and satisfaction in a romantic relationship might depend on gender, dyads, and time perspective. For example, some studies have found that women are generally less satisfied with their marriages than men (Brown et al., 2015; Dush et al., 2008; Van Laningham et al., 2001). Research also showed that women generally invest more in their relationships than men (Miller, 1986; Wood, 1993), and as a result, may make more frequent or incredible sacrifices than men (Ahmed & Shaheen, 2013) and incur higher costs, which can breed resentment and frustration over time (Whitton et al., 2007). In the dyad perspective, when a partner receives a sacrifice, they feel that the partner has their best interests in mind, is committed to the relationship, and is willing to pay certain costs to be together (Joel et al., 2013; Wieselquist et al., 1999). In addition, Bühler et al. (2021) demonstrated that relationship satisfaction depends on age and relationship duration. Notably, concerning age, relationship satisfaction declined from 20 to 40, reached its lowest point at age 40, then increased until age 65, and reached a plateau in late adulthood. As for the relationship duration, relationship satisfaction decreased during the first 10 years of the relationship, reached a low point at 10 years, then increased to 20 years, and then reduced again.

For Model 1, research hypotheses were formulated based on the literature review above, indicating associations between variables, gender, dyads, and time perspective. These hypotheses will be tested as the direct effect (DE) and indirect effect (IE) of the actor (A) and partner (P), along with their mutual interaction among women (W) and men (M) in the APIM and APIMeM models in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

The APIM (Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) includes four variables (two independent and two dependent) and allows the assessment of two actors (where the paths from one person's variable to his or her variable, $A \rightarrow A$) and two partners (where the paths from one person to the other person, $A \rightarrow P$) direct effects. The APIM in Model 1 (Figure 7. A) contains two independent variables: women's romantic relationship sanctification and men's romantic relationship sanctification, and two dependent variables: women's romantic relationship satisfaction and men's romantic relationship satisfaction. Hence, the following hypotheses (H) were proposed:

H1.1_w (A \rightarrow A): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction.

H1.1_M (A \rightarrow A): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction.

H1.2_W (A \rightarrow P): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction.

H1.2_M (A \rightarrow P): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction.

The APIMeM (Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) includes six variables (two: independent, mediators, and dependents) and allows the assessment of eight simple actors and partners' indirect effects (two: $A \rightarrow A$, $P \rightarrow P$, $A \rightarrow P$, $P \rightarrow A$). The APIMeM in Model 1 (Figure 7. B) contains two independent variables: women's romantic relationship sanctification and men's romantic relationship sanctification, two mediators: women's satisfaction with sacrifice and men's romantic relationship sanctifice, and two dependent variables: women's romantic relationship satisfaction variables. Hence, the following hypotheses were posted:

H1.3_W (A \rightarrow A): Women's sanctification of romantic relationships is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.3_M (A \rightarrow A): Men's sanctification of romantic relationships is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.4 $_{\rm W}$ (P \rightarrow P): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.4_M (P \rightarrow P): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.5_W (A \rightarrow P): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.5_M (A \rightarrow P): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.6_W (P \rightarrow A): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice. H1.6_M (P \rightarrow A): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice.

In Model 2, I will analyze direct and indirect associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships, romantic relationship commitment, and the mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice (Figure 8) in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

As Goddard (2007, as cited in Karyadeva, 2020) pointed out, commitment is a choice that helps lay the foundation for healthy relationships. In romantic unions, partners' engagement should be cultivated and, when needed, repaired. Commitment "means that we pledge, promise, or obligate ourselves to something or someone" (Goddard, 2007, as cited in Karyadeva, 2020, p. 196). It is also the intention to maintain a relationship over time (Johnson, 1973; Rusbult, 1980;

Stanley & Markman, 1992), and if that intention is high, it is a much better predictor of lower divorce rates and fewer problems in marriage (Schoebi et al., 2012). Similarly, commitment is described in Rusbult's Investment Model "as intent to persist in a relationship, including long-term orientation toward the involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment to it (e.g., a sense of "wellness"; Rusbult et al., 1998, pp. 359-360)".

Many psychological factors determine commitment to a relationship/marriage. There could be satisfaction levels, quality of alternatives, investment size (as in Rusbult's Investment Model), romantic attachment (Stanley et al., 1999), or, as Mahoney (2013) in the RSF emphasized, romantic relationship sanctification.

Researchers (Ellison et al., 2011; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney et al., 2022) showed that couples who sanctify their relationships have a stronger motivation to protect their romantic unions, invest more time and effort in strengthening them, and present lower factors of divorce risk. Karyadeva (2020) noted that the sanctification of romantic relationships was an essential predictor of commitment expressed as dedication and constraint in Stanley and Markman's (1992) commitment model. Similarly, results were obtained by Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al. (2024), where Polish individuals with a firmer belief that God exists and a more literal belief in Catholic teachings were more likely to view their intimate partnership as sanctified, which, next, was associated with greater relational commitment and a lower risk of union dissolution. In addition, Lambert and Dollahite (2008), in their qualitative study on marital commitment in religious couples (Christian, Jewish, and Muslim unions in long-term marriages averaging 20 years), found that religion helped spouses view their relationship as sacred. These beliefs, in turn, enhanced and stabilized their commitment to marriage.

The investment model (Rusbult, 1980) and researchers (Monk et al., 2014; Whitton et al., 2002; Stanley, 1998; Van Lange et al., 1997) point out that sacrifice can be considered an investment in the relationship that can predict commitment. Van Lange et al. (1997, p. 1377) claimed that "an act of sacrifice may be experienced as an investment in one's relationship, which in turn may strengthen feelings of commitment." Kelley (1978) argued that sacrifices might build commitment because, according to interdependence theory, for stable relationships to continue, certain prosocial maintenance behaviors, such as sacrificing for the good of the partner and the relationship, should occur.

The research results support this idea. For instance, Wieselquist et al. (1999) demonstrated that sacrifice increases trust between partners, fostering commitment and reciprocation of more sacrifice. Ogolsky and Bowers (2013) indicated that perception of a behavior (i.e., satisfaction with sacrifice) has a more substantial influence on commitment than the actual engagement in the

behavior itself. Stanley et al. (2006) showed that satisfaction with sacrifice in early marriage is associated with global relationship quality in the long term.

Furthermore, believers from many religions are expected to sacrifice. Spouses who accept the doctrine of their faith (e.g., seeing marriage as sacred and filled with the presence of God/Allah) have to be ready to make sacrifices and take care of their relationship. Because of that, these partners will likely be more willing to sacrifice and more satisfied with the sacrifice, which, in turn, will increase their commitment to the relationship.

Commitment, like relationship satisfaction, might depend on gender, types of relationships, and time perspective. Theory and research on gender differences show that marriage is often accompanied by significant changes in men's lives regarding identity, social networks, and responsible behavior (Nock, 1998; Stanley, 2002), which, at least at earlier ages and stages of relationships, may reduce their commitment (Stanley et al., 2004; Whitehead & Popenoe, 2002). Rhoades et al. (2006) showed that women may be more likely than men to interpret cohabitation as a step toward marriage or a sign of increased commitment. Stanley et al. (2004) noted that men who cohabited before engagement were less committed than men who had not cohabited before engagement. Sternberg (1986), in his theory of love, indicated that the course of the decision/commitment component of love during a close relationship depends mainly on the relationship's success. Generally, the level starts at zero before meeting or getting to know a partner and then increases. Typically, if the relationship is to become long-lasting, the increase in the level of commitment in the decision/engagement component will be gradual at first and then accelerate. If the relationship lasts for a long time, the level of commitment will generally stabilize, giving an S-shaped curve.

The above literature review established that beliefs about the sanctity of romantic relationships and commitment could be associated. However, we still do not know a lot about the possible mechanism of this connection. It is interesting to analyze what role the satisfaction of sacrifice can play. Moreover, considering gender, dyads, and time perspectives, the analyses might show more information and a detailed picture of how the sanctification of romantic relationships works.

Thus, in Model 2, I posted hypotheses, including the literature review above presenting the associations between tested variables and gender, dyads, and time perspective. Similarly, as in Model 1, these hypotheses will be tested as the direct effect (DE) and indirect effect (IE) of the actor (A) and partner (P), along with their mutual interaction among women (W) and men (M) in the APIM and APIMeM models in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

The APIM (Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) includes four variables (two independent and two dependent) and allows the assessment of two actors (where the paths from one person's variable to his or her variable, $A \rightarrow A$) and two partners (where the paths from one person to the other person, $A \rightarrow P$) direct effects. The APIM in Model 2 (Figure 8. A) contains two independent variables: women's romantic relationship sanctification and men's romantic relationship sanctification, and two dependent variables: women's romantic relationship commitment and men's romantic relationship commitment. Hence, the following hypotheses (H) were proposed:

H2.1_W (A \rightarrow A): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship commitment.

H2.1_M (A \rightarrow A): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship commitment.

H2.2_W (A \rightarrow P): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment.

H2.2_M (A \rightarrow P): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment.

The APIMeM (Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) includes six variables (two: independent, mediators, and dependents) and allows the assessment of eight simple actors and partners' indirect effects (two: $A \rightarrow A$, $P \rightarrow P$, $A \rightarrow P$, $P \rightarrow A$). The APIMeM in Model 2 (Figure 8. B) contains two independent variables: women's romantic relationship sanctification and men's romantic relationship sanctification, two mediators: women's satisfaction with sacrifice and men's romantic relationship commitment and men's romantic relationship commitment variables. Hence, the following hypotheses were posted:

H2.3_W (A \rightarrow A): Women's sanctification of romantic relationships is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship commitment through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice. H2.3_M (A \rightarrow A): Men's sanctification of romantic relationships is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship commitment through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice.

H2.4 w (P \rightarrow P): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship commitment through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice. H2.4_M (P \rightarrow P): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship commitment through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice. H2.5_W (A \rightarrow P): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice.

H2.5_M (A \rightarrow P): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment through one's own satisfaction with sacrifice.

H2.6_W (P \rightarrow A): Women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice.

H2.6_M (P \rightarrow A): Men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment through their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice.

Reminding, the sanctification of a romantic relationship indicates to what extent partners think their romantic union is a manifestation of God and/or is marked by sacred qualities (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013). Pargament and Mahoney (2005) underline that the sanctification of a romantic relationship is a "psychospiritual" construct. It is spiritual because of its reference point - sacred matters (i.e., marriage, romantic union). It is also a psychological process through which partners give divine and significant meaning to their relationships (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005).

Therefore, we can also perceive the sanctification of romantic relationships in the context of meaning-making theory (Park, 2013). In this theory, "meaning" is a constellation of individuals' global orientation systems, the framework of knowledge and motivation through which people understand and navigate their lives (Park, 2010). "Making meaning" is also the psychological process of working to restore, reorganize, and change the global orientation system of life when it has been disrupted or violated by negative, e.g., the death of a loved one, or positive, e.g., the birth of a child, marriage, life events (Park, 2013).

The global orientation system consists of three distinct aspects: beliefs, goals, and a subjective sense of meaning in life (Park, 2013; Park & Van Tongeren, 2022). Global beliefs encompass individuals' basic views of the world and other people. These may include beliefs such as fairness, justice, happiness, control, predictability, consistency, or benevolence (Park, 2013). Global goals are individuals' unique hierarchies of motives and values (Park & Van Tongeren, 2022). These global goals might include work, wealth, knowledge, and romantic relationships (Emmons, 1999). In addition, as Klinger (1998) noticed, a central aspect of global goals involves maintaining objects or states one already has, such as health or relationships with loved ones. A subjective sense of meaning in life presents the extent to which people feel that their experiences are consistent with their global beliefs and goals (Park & Van Tongeren, 2022).

Religion might be central to many people's global orientation systems. Religious belief systems can provide individuals with a comprehensive and integrated framework of meaning that enables them to explain what is happening in the world and their lives (Spilka et al., 2003). For many, religious goals may be the primary or ultimate determinant of their lives, such as serving God as a priest. Many goals can also be made sacred through sanctification, e.g., work, health, or romantic unions (Mahoney, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2021).

These religious meanings (beliefs and goals), activated through various life situations, might work "here and now" (e.g., triggering positive emotions, increasing subjective well-being) and long-term (e.g., setting goals and values, providing motivation for action). For example, Van Cappellen et al. (2016) showed that attending church activated the emotion of love and spontaneous generosity because participants were more willing to share a hypothetical lottery prize with others. Schnitker and Emmons (2013) noted that explicitly religious goals were associated with greater well-being and adaptive aim pursuit. In their meta-analysis, Mahoney et al. (2021) also presented that greater sanctification of romantic relationships was consistently associated with greater positive psychosocial adjustment and less harmful functioning.

The sanctification of romantic relationships, as a psychological process and a religious construct of meaning, can be activated in various life situations, e.g., when partners are thinking of getting married, have a wedding anniversary, and offspring appear. In such moments, sanctification provides positive emotions and increases relationship satisfaction and well-being (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013). Sanctification can also motivate partners to nurture their relationships, protect them, and make sacrifices for them in the long term (Mahoney, 2013; Karyadeva, 2020). If this is the case, their relationship can become a goal and value they will strive to maintain. Therefore, in the presented study, I decided to test the posted hypotheses for Models 1 and 2 in both perspectives, i.e., "here and now" and long-term (in the cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches, respectively). I think such analyses will make it possible to give a complete and comprehensive answer as to what role the sanctification of the relationship plays in its quality.

Finally, considering findings (e.g., Brown et al., 2015; Dush et al., 2008; Farooqi, 2014; Rhoades et al., 2006; Van Laningham et al., 2001) showing dissimilarities between women and men, various types of relationships in perceiving sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice, I decided to test possible sociodemographic differences. The analyses will have exploratory character; thus, no hypotheses were posted.

Chapter III Method

This chapter presents the method. It consists of four paragraphs: the first introduces the study participants, the second explains the procedure of gathering data, the third describes the measures used, and the final includes a description of the planned analyses.

3.1 Participants

In the first step, considering the recommendations proposed by Ledermann et al. (2022) and using their R code based on the Monte Carlo (MC) simulation in the R program (R Core Team, 2024), I calculated the sample size necessary to obtain direct actor and partner effects for the Actor–Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; see Model 1. A and 2. A) and indirect actor and partner effect for Actor–Partner Interdependence Extended Mediation Model (APIMeM; see Model 1. B and 2. B) with the expected power at .90 (power = 1- β). Next, I presented the Sample of participants (couples) with the detailed characteristics. Finally, for each APIM and APIMeM, I analyzed the power of the obtained direct and indirect actor and partner effects, considering the significance at (at α = .10; Type I error). The values of α and β include the conventional range for alpha, which is between 0.01 and 0.10, and for beta, between 0.05 and 0.20 (Banerjee et al., 2009) and were determined since posted hypotheses and planned analyses in APIM and APIMeM

Ledermann et al.'s (2022) approach is based on MC simulation, a method that allows the determination of sample size and power of APIM and APIMeM for specific parameters under various conditions. In MC simulations, many samples are generated from predefined population parameter values, such as product-moment correlations among the tested variables. These can be taken from previous research, including meta-analyses, or guessed by the researcher based on similar findings. In such an MC approach, the sample size is estimated by function *findPower* included in R code (Ledermann et al., 2022) that provides the minimum required sample size estimate for each effect and a specified sample size sequence (e.g., 80–210) that produces the desired power (e.g., .80) given the significance level. The power of each actor and partner effect is determined in Ledermann et al.'s (2022) R code in three steps: (1) generate a variance-covariance matrix for the model variables from the correlations among these variables and their variances, (2) estimate the parameters of the APIM and APIMeM based on the variance-covariance

matrix and a sample size of 100,000, and (3) run an MC simulation for the desired number of simulations.

The APIM includes four variables (two independent [X] and two dependent [Y]) and allows the assessment of two actors (where the paths from one person's X variable to his or her Y variable) and two partners' (where the paths from one person to the other person) direct effects. The APIM in Model 1 (Figure 7. A) contains the following variables: X_1 – women's romantic relationship sanctification, X_2 – men's romantic relationship sanctification, Y_1 – women's romantic relationship satisfaction, and Y_2 – men's romantic relationship satisfaction, and in Model 2 (Figure 8. A): X_1 – women's romantic relationship sanctification, X_2 – men's romantic relationship sanctification, Y_1 – women's romantic relationship commitment, and Y_2 – men's romantic relationship commitment. Based on previous research findings (e.g., Dew et al., 2020; Mahoney, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2021; Mahoney et al., 2023; Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024), for APIM in Model 1, I estimated the following correlations between these four variables $(X_1, X_2, Y_1, \text{ and } Y_2)$: $r_{X_1X_2} =$.40, $r_{X_1Y_1} = .30$, $r_{X_1Y_2} = .20$, $r_{X_2Y_1} = .20$, $r_{X_2Y_2} = .19$, and $r_{Y_1Y_2} = .50$, and in Model 2: $r_{X_1X_2} = .40$, $r_{X_1Y_1} = .30, r_{X_1Y_2} = .29, r_{X_2Y_1} = .29, r_{X_2Y_2} = .30, \text{ and } r_{Y_1Y_2} = .47.$ To determine the sample sizes for both models, I used 500 replications and specified a sequence of sample sizes ranging from 25 to 800 in step 25. For a power of .90, the mean sample sizes required for obtaining the significance of actor and partner effects in the APIM in Model 1 was 129, and in Model 2 was 112 couples.

The APIMeM includes six variables (two independent [X], two mediators [M], and two dependents [Y] and allows the assessment of eight simple actors and partners' indirect effects. The APIMeM in Model 1 (Figure 7. B) contains the following variables: X_1 – women's romantic relationship sanctification, X_2 – men's romantic relationship sanctification, M_1 – women's satisfaction with sacrifice, M_2 – women's satisfaction with sacrifice, Y_1 – women's romantic relationship satisfaction, and Y_2 – men's romantic relationship satisfaction, and in Model 2 (Figure 8. A): X_1 – women's romantic relationship sanctification, X_2 – men's romantic relationship sanctification, M_1 – women's satisfaction with sacrifice, M_2 – women's satisfaction with sacrifice, Y_1 – women's romantic relationship commitment, and Y_2 – men's romantic relationship commitment. Based on previous research findings (e.g., Dew et al., 2020; Mahoney, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2021; Mahoney et al., 2023; Zarzykca, Tomaka, et al., 2024), for APIMeM in Model 1, I estimated the following correlations between these six variables $(X_1, X_2, M_1, M_2, Y_1, M_$ and Y_2): $r_{X_1 X_2} = .20$, $r_{X_1 M_1} = .30$, $r_{X_1 M_2} = .25$, $r_{X_1 Y_1} = .26$, $r_{X_1 Y_2} = .20$, $r_{X_2 M_1} = .20$, $r_{X_2 M_2} = .29$, $r_{X_2 Y_1} = .20, r_{X_2 Y_2} = .19, r_{M_1 M_2} = .40, r_{M_1 Y_1} = .54, r_{M_1 Y_2} = .40, r_{M_2 Y_1} = .45, r_{M_2 Y_2} = .46, and$ $r_{Y_1 Y_2} = .52$ and in Model 2: $r_{X_1 X_2} = .20$, $r_{X_1 M_1} = .20$, $r_{X_1 M_2} = .15$, $r_{X_1 Y_1} = .28$, $r_{X_1 Y_2} = .20$, $r_{X_2 M_1} = .30, r_{X_2 M_2} = .19, r_{X_2 Y_1} = .25, r_{X_2 Y_2} = .33, r_{M_1 M_2} = .32, r_{M_1 Y_1} = .20, r_{M_1 Y_2} = .50, r_{M_2 Y_1} = .30,$ $r_{M^2Y^2}$ = .40, and $r_{Y^1Y^2}$ = .40. To determine the sample sizes for both models, similar as in the APIM, I used 500 replications and specified a sequence of sample sizes ranging from 25 to 800 in step 25. For a power of .90, the mean sample sizes required for obtained significance simple actor and partner indirect effects in the APIMeM in Model 1 was 256, and in Model 2 was 186 couples.

To summarize the above analyses, a sample size between 112 and 265 couples would be sufficient to obtain significant actor and partner effects in the APIM and APIMeM models. The research models (Models 1 and 2) will be tested using cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches. It is well known that research conducted in a longitudinal design is characterized by a loss of participants (approximately 30-50%); especially in the study of dyads, an oversampling method will be used (Kalton, 2009). Therefore, a larger group of couples will be invited to participate in the study at Time 1 - approximately 370 couples (40% more).

Initially (in Time 1), 926 participants completed the set of questionaries, potentially giving 463 couples. However, in 98 cases, the measures were completed only by one partner, primarily by women (63; 64.28%). In addition, 18 participants (1.94%) answered that they are in homosexual relationships. Due to the characteristics of the research conducted and the very small sample of participants who are in homosexual unions, they were excluded from further analysis. Including the unique code (see 3.2 Procedure) allowed the identification of 405 heterosexual couples. Thus, the sample (in Time 1) consisted of 405 Polish heterosexual couples; 405 were female and 405 male. The mean age of women was 33.32 years (SD = 10.18), and men 35.06 (SD = 10.34). Among the participants, 87.9% (n = 712) declared themselves to be Roman Catholic, 1.0% (n = 8) as Greek Catholic, 1.2% (n = 10) as Pentecostal Church, 0.9% (n = 7) as Agnostic, 3.5% (n = 28) as Atheist, and 3.7% (n = 30) did not respond. Approximately 11.5% (n = 93) of the respondents described themselves as deeply religious, 43.2% (n = 350) as religious, and 5.9% (n = 48) indicated that they were non-religious. About 12.17% (n = 98) of respondents were members of a religious community such as Caritas, Home Church, Opus Dei, or KUL Academic Ministry. The couples described their relationships as marriage (50.4%; n = 204), cohabitation (30.6%; n = 124), or fiancé (19.0%; n = 77). The average duration of the relationship was 8.08 years (SD = 8.55). About 40.3% (n = 163) of couples had one child at least. Most reported living in urban areas (76.5%; n = 314) and had at least secondary education (96.3%; n = 775). Table 2 presents the more detailed characteristics of participants and dyads included in Time 1.

In the second measurement (after three months, Time 2), 218 couples dropped out of the study (in 55.4% of cases, only one partner completed the set of questionaries; two relationships were broken down), and 187 were retained at Time 2 (a retention rate = 46.17%). The mean age of women was 34.17 years (SD = 10.64), and men 36.06 (SD = 10.88). The proportion of being in

romantic unions was quite similar to in Time 1, i.e., marriage (50.0%; n = 93), cohabitation (29.6%; n = 55), or fiancé (20.4%; n = 38). The average duration of the relationship was 8.45 years (SD = 9.09). Table 2 presents the more detailed characteristics of participants and dyads included in Time 2.

In the final measurement (after the next three months, Time 3), compared to Time 1, 291 couples dropped out of the study (in 58.5% of cases, only one partner completed the set of questionnaires; one relationship was broken down), and 114 were retained at Time 3 (a retention rate compared to Time 1 = 28.15%). The mean age of women was 32.15 (SD = 10.01) and for men 33.96 (SD = 10.39) years. The proportion of being in romantic unions was quite like Times 1 and 2, i.e., marriage (50.0%; n = 57), cohabitation (26.3%; n = 30), or fiancé (23.7%; n = 27). The average duration of the relationship was 7.48 years (SD = 7.60). 16 of the 114 couples who participated at Time 3 did not respond at Time 2. Therefore, 98 couples who completed a set of questionnaires three times, i.e., in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3, were included in the longitudinal data set. Table 2 below shows the detailed characteristics of the participants (dyads).

Table 2

Participant Demographic Characteristics

				Total S NParticipa (NDyads	Sample $a_{nts} = 810$ $a_{nts} = 405$)			
			Cross-Sectio	onal Data Set			Longitudir	al Data Set
Variable	${ m Tin} \ N_{ m Participal} \ (N_{ m Dyads}$	he 1 hts = 810 = 405)	Tin N _{Participa} (N _{Dyads} Retention ra	the 2 nts = 374 = 187) nte = 46.17%	Tin N _{Participa} (N _{Dyads} Retention ra	the 3 $n_{tts} = 228$ = 114) $n_{tte} = 28.15\%$	Time 1, N _{Participa} (N _{Dyad} Retention ra	2, and 3 nts = 196 s = 98) tte = 24.20%
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Age, M (SD)	33.32 (10.18)	35.06 (10.34)	34.17 (10.64)	36.06 (10.88)	32.15 (10.01)	33.96 (10.39)	32.55 (10.44)	34.46 (10.78)
Education, <i>n</i> (%)								
1. Elementary	15 (3.7%)	20 (4.9%)	6 (3.2%)	9 (4.8%)	2 (1.8%)	4 (3.5%)	1 (1.0%)	3 (3.1%)
2. Secondary	131 (32.3%)	139 (34.3%)	64 (34.4%)	64 (34.4%)	36 (31.6%)	35 (30.7%)	32 (32.7%)	30 (30.6%)
3. High	259 (64.0%)	246 (60.7%)	116 (62.4%)	113 (60.8%)	76 (66.7%)	75 (65.8%)	65 (66.3%)	65 (66.3%)
Professional situation, <i>n</i> (%)								
1. Working	226 (55.8%)	253 (62.5%)	115 (61.8%)	129 (69.4%)	61 (53.5%)	74 (64.9%)	52 (53.1%)	64 (65.3%)
2. Working and studying	122 (30.1%)	102 (25.2%)	51 (27.4%)	42 (22.6%)	40 (35.1%)	32 (28.1%)	35 (35.7%)	28 (28.6%)
3. Parental leave	28 (6.9%)	23 (5.7%)	8 (4.3%)	4 (2.2%)	7 (6.1%)	3 (2.6%)	6 (6.1%)	2 (2.0%)
4. Unemployed	24 (6.9%)	23 (5.7%)	8 (4.3%)	8 (4.3%)	4 (3.5%)	4 (3.5%)	3 (3.1%)	3 (3.1%)
5. Retirement/Pension	5 (1.2%)	4 (1.0%)	4 (2.2%)	3 (1.6%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (2.0%)	1 (1.0%)
Income in PLN/month, <i>n</i> (%)								
1.0 - 2000	141 (34.8%)	127 (31.4%)	55 (29.6%)	48 (25.8%)	36 (31.6%)	28 (24.6%)	32 (32.7%)	24 (24.5%)
$2.2\ 001 - 4\ 000$	192 (47.4%)	191 (47.2%)	95 (51.1%)	92 (49.5%)	53 (46.5%)	52 (45.6%)	45 (45.9%)	44 (44.9%)
3. Above 4 001	72 (17.8%)	87 (21.5%)	36 (19.4%)	46 (24.7%)	25 (21.9%)	34 (29.8%)	21 (21.4%)	30 (30.6%)
Religiosity, <i>n</i> (%)								
1. Deeply religious	49 (12.1%)	44 (10.9%)	20 (10.8%)	15 (8.1%)	13 (11.4%)	10 (8.8%)	12 (12.2%)	9 (9.2%)

2. Religious	180 (44.4%)	170 (42.0%)	70 (37.6%)	71 (38.2%)	47 (41.2%)	47 (41.2%)	39 (39.8%)	40 (40.8%)
3. Indifferent	90 (22.2%)	98 (24.2%)	48 (25.8%)	53 (28.5%)	34 (29.8%)	35 (30.7%)	28 (28.6%)	29 (29.6%)
4. Weakly religious	64 (15.8%)	67 (16.5%)	35 (18.8%)	34 (18.3%)	17 (14.9%)	17 (14.9%)	16 (16.3%)	15 (15.3%)
5. Non-religious	22 (5.4%)	26 (6.4%)	13 (7.0%)	13 (7.0%)	3 (2.6%)	5 (4.4%)	3 (3.1%)	5 (5.1%)
	Tin NParticipar	the 1 $_{\rm nts} = 810$	Tin NParticipar	the 2 $_{\rm nts} = 374$	Tin N _{Participa}	ne 3 $_{\rm nts} = 228$	Time 1, <i>N</i> Participat	2, and 3 $_{\rm nts} = 196$
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Confession, <i>n</i> (%)								
1. Roman Catholic	352 (86.9%)	360 (88.9%)	156 (83.9%)	159 (85.5%)	98 (86.0%)	102 (89.5%)	83 (84.7%)	87 (88.8%)
2. Other	16 (3.9%)	17 (4.1%)	7 (3.6%)	8 (4.2%)	4 (3.6%)	4 (4.5%)	3 (3.0%)	4 (4.0%)
3. Agnostic	5 (1.2%)	2 (0.5%)	4 (2.2%)	2 (1.1%)	3 (2.6%)	1 (0.9%)	3 (3.1%)	1 (1.0%)
4. Atheist	16 (4.0%)	12 (3.0%)	11 (5.9%)	8 (4.3%)	5 (4.4%)	1 (0.9%)	5 (5.1%)	1 (1.0%)
5. None	16 (4.0%)	14 (3.5%)	8 (4.3%)	9 (4.8%)	4 (3.5%)	5 (4.4%)	4 (4.1%)	5 (5.1%)
Membership in a religious community, n (%)	50 (12.3%)	48 (11.9%)	13 (7.0%)	13 (7.0%)	11 (9.6%)	11 (9.6%)	10 (10.2%)	10 (10.2%)
Previously married, n (%)	29 (7.2%)	28 (6.9%)	17 (9.1%)	17 (9.1%)	8 (7.0%)	9 (7.9%)	7 (7.1%)	8 (8.2%)
Dyads	${ m Tim}_{N_{ m Dyads}}$	ne 1 = 405	Tin N _{Dyads}	ne 2 = 187	Tin $N_{ m Dyads}$	ne 3 = 114	Time 1, N _{Dyad}	2, and 3 s = 98
Residence, n (%)								
1. Village	91 (22	2.5%)	46 (24	4.7%)	25 (2	1.9%)	23 (2.	3.5%)
2. City below 50,000	83 (20	0.5%)	35 (18	8.8%)	17 (1	4.9%)	13 (13	3.3%)
3. City over 50,001	231 (5	7.0%)	105 (5	6.5%)	72 (6	3.2%)	62 (63	3.3%)
Kind of relationship, n (%)								
1. Marriage	204 (5	0.4%)	93 (50	0.0%)	57 (5	0.0%)	52 (5.	3.1%)
2. Cohabitation	124 (3	0.6%)	55 (29	9.6%)	30 (2	6.3%)	23 (23	3.5%)
3. Fiancé	77 (19	9.0%)	38 (20	0.4%)	27 (2	3.7%)	23 (23	3.5%)
Relationship duration, $M(SD)$	p duration, <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>) 8.08 (8.55)		8.45 ((9.09)	7.48	(7.60)	7.21 ((7.74)
Family sizes, n (%)								
1. No children	241 (5	9.8%)	114 (6	(1.3%)	70 (6	1.4%)	62 (6.	3.3%)

Dyads	Time 1 $N_{\text{Dyads}} = 405$	Time 2 $N_{\rm Dyads} = 187$	Time 3 $N_{\text{Dyads}} = 114$	Time 1, 2, and 3 $N_{\text{Dyads}} = 98$
2. One child	61 (15.1%)	33 (17.7%)	22 (19.3%)	17 (17.3%)
3. Two children	68 (16.8%)	30 (3.8%)	15 (13.2%)	12 (12.2%)
4. Three and more children	34 (8.4%)	2 (1.1%)	7 (6.27.%)	7 (7.1.%)

Finally, based on gathered and retained samples of couples in Time 1 (N = 405), Time 2 (N = 187), and Time 3 (N = 114), the longitudinal approach (N = 98) and correlation results (see Tables 12, p. 113, and 13, p. 115), I calculated the power of actor and partner effects in the APIM and APIMeM models (separately in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches) including Ledermann et al.'s (2022) R code with the significance level at .10.

In Model 1, the mean power of actor and partner effects for APIM at Time 1 was .96, at Time 2 .92, and at Time 3 .85. In longitudinal models: Time $1 \rightarrow$ Time 2 .86 and Time $1 \rightarrow$ Time 3 .80. The mean power of simple actor and partner indirect effect for APIMeM at Time 1 was .97, at Time 2 .92, and at Time 3 .87, and in the longitudinal model .80.

In Model 2, the mean power of actor and partner effects for APIM at Time 1 was .98, at Time 2 .97, at Time 3 .87, and in longitudinal models: Time $1 \rightarrow$ Time 2 .92, and Time $1 \rightarrow$ Time 3 .86. The mean power of simple actor and partner indirect effect for APIMeM at Time 1 was .98, at Time 2 .95, at Time 3 .90, and in the longitudinal model .84.

3.2 Procedure

On my website, I created a special section (<u>https://psychologiazbliska.pl/pomoz-nauce/</u>) where I described my research project, explained its objectives, and included information about the research methodology and possible awards for participants. There, I also provided a link to the set of questionnaires consisting of sociodemographic questions, the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship Scale, the Relationship Assessment Scale, the Romantic Relationship Commitment Scale, and the Satisfaction with Sacrifice Scale (see 3.3 Measures) prepared in Google Forms (online). Participants completed this research set online, in Polish. They had the opportunity to do so on desktop or mobile.

Couples were recruited in four ways. First, information about my research project was shared on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. I promoted my posts with details about the study and an invitation to participate. These posts were viral and reached approximately 6,000 people in romantic relationships. Most of them decided to join in the research. Second, I used snowball sampling (Parker et al., 2019). Students attending the lectures Social Communication Processes in Management and Psychology of Religion lecture at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in 2022/2023 assisted in recruiting partners among their friends, colleagues, and family. Third, members from various religious communities, like Home Church, KUL Academic Ministry, and Facebook groups, such as Marital Struggles, Love is Most Important, and Wedding, expressed interest in participating in my research. Fourth, I developed special leaflets that introduced my research project, outlined its objectives, and provided links to

questionnaires (see Appendix). I and my friends distributed these leaflets among the citizens of Lublin and Radom, numbering about 3,000.

In the description of my research, participants were informed that the study had a longitudinal design, and they would be invited to complete the same online set of questionnaires three times, about three months apart. Because of that, they were asked to provide the email address to which I would send an invitation to the second and third waves of the study. Leaving an email address was voluntary. After each stage of the research, couples had the opportunity to win two cash awards: 500 PLN (Time 1), 750 PLN (Time 2), and 1,000 PLN (Time 3). The information about the winners was published on a Facebook fan page, "Psychologiazbliska."

Each person who decided to participate in the research was asked to create a special code consisting of their name and the number of births. For example, if the study involved Kate, who was born on the 13th of May, and Kamil, who was born on the 19th of December, Kate's code would be "Kate32" and Kamil's code would be "Kamil32" (13+19=32). This code allowed me to match partners and treat them as a couple. Identifying such couples in the second and third measurements was also useful. The likelihood of names and the sum of birthdays repeating between couples was very low.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. The respondents' anonymity was ensured to reduce the chance of socially desirable responses. The Research Ethics Committee approved the procedure of the Institute of Psychology at the University where the study was conducted (KEBN 25/2022). The research had no funding.

3.3 Measures

In the beginning (in Time 1), participants were invited to create a special code (e.g., Kate32) and then provide answers to a set of sociodemographic questions about themselves, i.e., their age, education, professional situation, income, religiosity, confession, participation in various religious communities, and being previously married. Then, they were asked to describe their romantic relationship, i.e., where they live, what kind of relationship they have, how long they have been together, and how many children they have. In the second and third measurements (Time 2 and 3), they were only asked about the possibility of changes in their union, i.e., whether they are in the same relationship as in Time 1, whether they have had new offspring, or are expecting them. Next, at each measurement time, they were invited to complete the set of questionnaires below (the methods used are presented in the Appendix).

Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage. I used the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale (Mahoney et al., 2009), which measures the extent to

which partners/spouses perceive their relationship/marriage as a manifestation of God (Theistic Sanctification, e.g., *God lives through my romantic relationship/marriage*) and/or as possessing sacred qualities (Non-theistic Sanctification, e.g., *My romantic relationship/marriage is holy*). The Scale allows for calculating a total score (an overall measure of the Sanctification of a Romantic Relationship/Marriage) and scores on two sub-scales (Theistic and Non-theistic Sanctification). It comprises 20 items that respondents answer on a seven-point scale (ranging from 1 - strongly *disagree* to 7 - strongly *agree*). The measure was translated by Bartczuk (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) in 2019 and utilized in Polish research (e.g., Zarzycka, Tomaka et al., 2024).

I decided to test the psychometric properties of the Polish version of the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale by analyzing its structure, correlations between the subscales, the model's fit to the data using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and the scale's reliability. Two adult samples were used to analyze the Scale's psychometric properties. For Sample 1, I recruited an extra group of people who had not participated in the project's research. For sample 2, I used the data I collected at T1 as part of the project's research.

Sample 1 consisted of 470 Polish, married, or cohabiting individuals; 237 were female, and 233 were male. Their mean age was 39 years (SD = 13.58). Among the participants, 90.2% declared themselves Roman Catholic. The other religious declarations were as follows: deeply religious (5.1%), religious (30%), and indifferent (25.7%). The respondents described their relationships as married civil-religious (49.2%), married civil (17.4%), or unmarried cohabitation (33.4%). Most reported living in urban areas (75.5%) and had at least secondary education (90.4%). Sample 2 (N = 810 individuals, i.e., 405 couples) was described above in point 3.1, Participants and Procedure.

In both Samples, the correlations between the subscales (Theistic and Non-theistic Sanctification) were very high, i.e., r = .84 and .83. Therefore, I decided to test whether the scale was one-dimensional. There are various ways of assessing whether a set of items measures one latent trait, such as Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and Items Response Technique (Ziegler & Hagemann, 2015). Revelle and Condon (2023) proposed one more way of testing unidimensionality, i.e., *unidim*, which assesses the *u* index of unidimensionality in the R program (R Core Team, 2024) by the *psych* package (Revelle, 2024). Generally, as described by Revelle and Condon (2023), *u* is the product of two other indices: τ (a measure of τ equivalence) and ρ_c (a measure of congeneric fit), and the higher it is (max 1.0), the more evidence for unidimensionality. In the presented analysis, the value of the *u* index was high, .97 (in Sample 1) and .96 (in Sample 2), confirming that the total score of the Scale can be calculated.

Next, I used AMOS to conduct CFA with maximum likelihood estimation (Arbuckle, 2019) to test the one general factor model of the Scale consisting of 20 items. To evaluate the fit of the model, I applied the following indices: χ^2 divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2 /df), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), the comparative fit index (CFI), the normed fit index (NFI), the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) with the 90% confidence interval (CI). The analyses were carried out in Sample 1 and Sample 2. Table 3 below shows the results of the analyses.

Table 3

Summary of CFA on the Sanctification of the Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	TLI	CFI	NFI	SRMR	RMSEA	LLCI	ULCI
Sample 1										
General Factor	1366.69	162	8.43	.901	.916	.906	.066	.126	.120	.132
Sample 2										
General Factor	2023.83	159	12.72	.908	.923	.917	.069	.120	.116	.125
Note. $LLCI = Lc$	wer limit c	onfiden	ce interv	al of the	e RMSE	EA; ULO	CI = Upper	· limit confid	lence inte	erval of th

Note. LLCI = Lower limit confidence interval of the RMSEA; ULCI = Upper limit confidence interval of the RMSEA.

In both Samples, the general factor model obtained satisfactory fit indices. χ^2 is known to be too restrictive, as it nearly always rejects the model when large samples are used (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). Both samples' TLI, CFI, and NFI were above the required values, i.e., < .90. SRMR demonstrated an acceptable fit (i.e., <.08). However, RMSEA did not obtain satisfactory fit indices, < .06 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The value of RMSEA, as noticed by Kenny et al. (2015), has some problems, especially with simpler models with few degrees of freedom, and can wrongly indicate a poor fit, even when, in fact, the model fits the data well. Thus, the RMSEA's scores should be interpreted cautiously (Kenny et al., 2015).

Next, I tested gender measurement invariance (MI) in this model in both Samples using Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MGCFA) in Amos (Arbuckle, 2019). There is no consensus about the best-fit indices or cutoff values in analyzing gender MI models (Putnick & Bornstein, 2016). Therefore, in the calculations, I included the criteria recommended by Cheung and Rensvold (2002) and Chen (2007) when N > 300, i.e., a difference in CFI (<.01), RMSEA (<.03), and SRMR (<.03 when moving from configural to metric and <.01 when moving from metric to scalar invariance model) with increasingly restricted models (Table 4). However, I did not analyze $\Delta \chi^2$ due to its sensitivity to large samples (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003).

Table 4

Models	χ^2	df	р	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	ΔRMSEA	ΔSRMR	ΔCFI
Sample 1									
Configural	1807.56	324	.001	.096	.068	.902			
Metric	1840.31	343	.001	.093	.068	.901	.003	.000	.001
Scalar	1868.79	363	.001	.093	.068	.900	.000	.000	.001
Sample 2									
Configural	2294.28	337	.001	.096	.078	.923			
Metric	2938.82	357	.001	.094	.078	.920	.002	.000	.003
Scalar	2941.09	358	.001	.093	.077	.919	.001	.001	.001

Gender Measurement Invariance of the Sanctification of the Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale

In the first step, I tested if the model structure was comparable in women and men groups (configural invariance). This model fits the data well in both samples. Next, I tested the model with all factor loadings constrained to be equal across both subgroups (metric invariance). The metric invariance model also demonstrated good fit and acceptable changes between RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI in both samples. Finally, I checked if all intercepts were constrained across both subgroups (scalar invariance). The scalar invariance model also fit the data well, and changes between RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI were also acceptable in both samples.

Finally, I assessed the Scale's internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega. In both samples, it was excellent: $\alpha = .98$, $\omega = .98$ in Sample 1 and $\alpha = .97$, $\omega = .98$ in Sample 2. The detailed results of the alpha and omega coefficients in Sample 2 (separately for women, men, and dyads) are shown in Table 7 on p. 106.

In conclusion, the Polish version of the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale allows for measuring one general factor of sanctification. This method is also suitable for measuring cross-gender differences accurately and presents very good reliability. Considering the above reasons, I included the general factor of Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage in the analyses, calculated as the mean of the 20 items.

Romantic Relationship/Marriage Satisfaction. *Relationship Assessment Scale* (Hendrick, 1988) is a 7-item scale to measure general relationship satisfaction (e.g., *How well does your partner meet your needs?*). Respondents answer each item using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 - *low satisfaction* to 5 - *high satisfaction*. The Polish adaptation (Adamczyk et al., 2022) of the Scale has good internal consistency $\alpha = .89$ (N = 733) and is also suitable for measuring cross-gender differences accurately. The presented study confirmed these psychometric properties in

a sample of 810 participants (Time 1). The model with general factor: $\chi^2(14) = 7.10$, p < .001, CFI = .966, TLI = .949, RMSEA = .087, 90% CI [.071, .103], SRMR = .039 fitted to data very good. The detailed results of the alpha and omega coefficients (separately for women, men, and dyads) are shown in Table 7 on p. 106.

Romantic Relationship/Marriage Commitment. Rusbult et al. (1998) developed the Investment Model Scale to measure Commitment level and three bases of dependence: Satisfaction Level, Quality of Alternatives, and Investment Size. The analyses showed that the items designed to measure each construct exhibited good reliability, with high item-total correlations (above .40) and strong alpha coefficients (above .82). Moreover, factor analyses confirmed four factors measuring four independent constructs. The Commitment Level was assessed by seven items (e.g., *I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner*), the Satisfaction Level (e.g., *Our relationship makes me very happy*), the Quality of Alternatives (e.g., *My needs for intimacy, companionship, etc., could easily be fulfilled in an alternative relationship*), and the Investment Size by five items (e.g., *I feel very involved in our relationship-like I have put a great deal into it*). All subscale items were rated on an eight-point scale ranging from 0 (*do not agree at all*) to 8 (*completely agree*).

Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) modified the Investment Model Scale by reducing its length due to the nature of their research (online) and to maximize participation. Using data from Rusbult et al. (1998), they included only items with the highest item-total averages. Hence, Investment Model measures were shortened to three items each (down from the original five-item scales) for Satisfaction and Alternatives and four for Commitment (down from the original seven-item scale). Because the investment subscale was particularly interesting in their research, they did not short it. All Investment Model subscale items were rated on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 9 (*completely agree*).

Lachowska, Zarzycka, Korulczyk, and Więsyk (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) translated the Modified Investment Model Scale (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006) in 2021 and used it in their research. In the presented study, I used only the Commitment Level subscale consisting of 4 items (i.e., *I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner; I feel very attached to our relationship—very strongly linked to my partner; I want our relationship to last forever; I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (e.g., I imagine being with my partner several years from now)*). Participants rate each item on a 9-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 9 (*completely agree*).

I decided to test this Polish-translated Subscale's psychometric properties by analyzing its structure, the model's fit to the data using CFA, and the scale's reliability. Two adult samples were

used to analyze the Subscale's psychometric properties. For Sample 1, I recruited an extra group of people who had not participated in the project's research. For sample 2, I used the data I collected at T1 as part of the project's research.

Sample 1 consisted of 296 Polish, married, or cohabiting individuals; 159 were female, and 137 were male. Their mean age was 37 years (SD = 4.72). Among the participants, 90.2% declared themselves Roman Catholic. The respondents described their relationships as married civil-religious (59.8%), married civil (10.1%), or unmarried cohabitation (30.1%). Most reported living in urban areas (76.7%) and had at least secondary education (92.9%). Sample 2 (N = 810 individuals, i.e., 405 couples) was described above in point 3.1, Participants and Procedure.

I followed the same procedure as in the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale (Mahoney et al., 2009). First, I used AMOS to conduct CFA with asymptotically distribution-free (Arbuckle, 2019) in both samples to test the fit indices of one general factor model comprising four items. Secondly, I calculated the gender measurement invariance. Finally, I assess the internal consistency using Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω .

In both samples, the fit indices of one general factor model were acceptable (except for the RMSEA). For Sample 1, ($\chi^2(2) = 6.72$, p < .05, $\chi^2/df = 3.36$, TLI = .908, CFI = .957, NFI = .942, SRMR = .036, and RMSEA = .090, and for Sample 2 ($\chi^2(2) = 16.12$, p < .001, $\chi^2/df = 8.05$, TLI = .907, CFI = .916, NFI = .908, SRMR = .031, and RMSEA = .091. As Kenny et al. (2015) noticed, the value of RMSEA has problems with simpler models with few degrees of freedom and can wrongly indicate a poor fit, even when the model fits the data well. Next, I tested if the model structure was comparable in female and male groups (configural invariance), if all factor loadings were constrained to be equal across both subgroups (metric invariance), and if all intercepts were constrained across both subgroups (scalar invariance). The configural, metric, and scalar invariance models also fit the data well, and changes between RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI were also acceptable in both samples (Table 5). Finally, I analyzed the internal consistency. In Sample 1, $\alpha = .82$, $\omega = .82$, and Sample 2, $\alpha = .90$, $\omega = .90$. The detailed results of the alpha coefficients in Sample 2 (separately for women, men, and dyads) are shown in Table 7 on p. 106.

Table 5

Gender Measurement Invariance of the Commitment Level

Models	χ^2	df	р	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	ΔRMSEA	ΔSRMR	ΔCFI
Sample 1									
Configural	15.18	4	.004	.097	.050	.976			
Metric	16.39	7	.022	.068	.055	.980	.029	.005	.004

Models	χ^2	df	р	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	ΔRMSEA	∆SRMR	ΔCFI
Scalar	16.47	8	.036	.060	.054	.982	.008	.001	.002
Sample 2									
Configural	54.13	4	.001	.131	.035	.976			
Metric	61.22	7	.001	.103	.032	.974	.028	.003	.002
Scalar	61.22	8	.001	.096	.032	.974	.007	.000	.000

Satisfaction with Sacrifice. I included the *Satisfaction with Sacrifice Scale* from The Commitment Inventory (Stanley & Markman, 1992) to assess the degree to which the individual views sacrifice for the relationship to be rewarding. It consists of 6 items (e.g., *It makes me feel good to sacrifice for my partner*). Participants rate each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 - *strongly disagree* to 7 - *strongly agree*.

The Scale was translated from English to Polish by three translators and back-translated by three bilingual Polish graduate students with a linguistics background and psychological assessment training. A committee of Professor Zarzycka and two doctoral students in psychology (Kamil Tomaka and Michał Grupa) made the final selection of items for the Polish in 2020. Next, I decided to test this Polish-translated Scale's psychometric properties by analyzing its structure, the model's fit to the data using CFA, and the scale's reliability. Two adult samples were used to analyze the Scale's psychometric properties. For Sample 1, I recruited an extra group of people who had not participated in the project's research. For sample 2, I used the data I collected at T1 as part of the project's research.

Sample 1 consisted of 349 Polish individuals; 204 were female, and 145 were male. Their mean age was 38.50 years (SD = 12.96). Among the participants, 97.7% declared themselves Roman Catholic. The other religious declarations were as follows: deeply religious (6.0%), religious (54.7%), and indifferent (9.2%). Most reported living in urban areas (70.8%) and had at least secondary education (87.3%). Sample 2 (N = 810 individuals, i.e., 405 couples) was described above in point 3.1, Participants and Procedure.

I followed the same procedure as in the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale (Mahoney et al., 2009) and Commitment Level (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006). First, I used AMOS to conduct CFA with maximum likelihood estimation (Arbuckle, 2019) in both samples to test the fit indices of one general factor model comprising 6 items. Secondly, I calculated the gender measurement invariance. Finally, I assess the internal consistency using Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω .

In both samples, the fit indices of one general factor model were acceptable. For Sample 1, ($\chi^2(9) = 20.89$, p = .013, $\chi^2/df = 2.32$, TLI = .964, CFI = .978, NFI = .963, SRMR = .033, and

RMSEA = .062, and for Sample 2 ($\chi^2(9) = 73.23$, p < .001, $\chi^2/df = 8.14$, TLI = .925, CFI = .955, NFI = .950, SRMR = .046, and RMSEA = .094. Next, I tested if the model structure was comparable in female and male groups (configural invariance), if all factor loadings were constrained to be equal across both subgroups (metric invariance), and if all intercepts were constrained across both subgroups (scalar invariance). The configural, metric, and scalar invariance models also fit the data well, and changes between RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI were also acceptable in both samples (Table 6). Finally, I analyzed the internal consistency. In Sample 1 $\alpha = .81$, $\omega = .81$, and Sample 2 $\alpha = .80$, $\omega = .79$. The detailed results of the alpha coefficients in Sample 2 (separately for women, men, and dyads) are shown in Table 7 on p. 106.

Table 6

Models	χ^2	df	р	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	ΔRMSEA	∆SRMR	ΔCFI
Sample 1									
Configural	29.73	18	.040	.043	.033	.977			
Metric	31.38	23	.033	.032	.034	.984	.011	.001	.007
Scalar	37.94	24	.035	.041	.040	.975	.009	.006	.009
Sample 2									
Configural	57.69	18	.001	.055	.033	.970			
Metric	71.31	23	.001	.054	.045	.964	.001	.012	.006
Scalar	72.46	24	.001	.053	.051	.964	.001	.006	.000

Gender Measurement Invariance of the Satisfaction with Sacrifice Scale

3.4 Statistical Analyses

Statistical analyses were performed to test the hypothesis in five steps. First, the mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, normal distribution, and Cronbach's alpha of the critical variables (sanctification of romantic relationship, romantic relationship satisfaction, romantic relationship commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice) were calculated in a sample of women and men using IBM SPSS Statistics v.29. Second, the inter-group and intra-group differences between women/men and key variables using *t*-tests and repeated-measures ANOVA were tested. Third, Lee and Preacher's (2013) procedure and Diedenhofen and Musch's (2015) *cocor* package in R (R Core Team, 2024) were used to analyze the differences in correlations of studied variables. Fourth, the IBM SPSS Statistics v.29 with MEDYAD software (Coutts et al., 2019) was used to conduct the direct (APIM) and indirect (APIMeM) effects of Models 1 and 2 in the cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches. Before the analysis, all studied variables were standardized, and the standardized regression coefficients (β) presented the associations between the tested variables in

Models 1 and 2 (Kenny et al., 2020). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to obtain the 90% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI). Finally, the sociodemographic differences between the tested variables were assessed in IBM SPSS Statistics v.29, including non-parametric (Kruskal-Wallis Test) and parametric tests (one-way ANOVA). The next chapter presents the results of the analyses that were conducted.

Chapter IV Results

This chapter describes the results. It consists of four paragraphs: the first presents the descriptive statistics, sex differences, and reliability; the second presents the correlations analyses; the third includes the APIM and APIMeM analyses; and the final presents differences in sociodemographic characteristics.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics, Sex Differences, and Reliability

In the first step, I calculated the descriptive statistics for all study variables measured in the cross-sectional and longitudinal approach. The results are presented in Tables 7 (p. 106) and 8 (p. 107), respectively.

In the cross-sectional approach in the total group (dyads), the sanctification of romantic relationship (RR)¹ mean score ranged from 3.80 to 3.92, the skewness from -0.05 to -0.11, and the kurtosis from -1.06 to -1.25. The RR satisfaction mean score ranged from 3.94 to 4.06, the skewness from -0.88 to -1.01, and the kurtosis from 0.61 to 1.13. The RR commitment mean score ranged from 7.40 to 7.70, the skewness from -1.25 to -1.46, and the kurtosis from 1.04 to 1.80. The satisfaction with sacrifice (SWS)² mean score ranged from 4.98 to 5.15, the skewness from -0.12 to -0.57, and the kurtosis from -0.57 to 0.16. At each point in time, the distributions were significantly non-normal for the variables: sanctification of the RR (W = 0.95, p < .001, W = 0.95, p < .001, respectively), RR satisfaction (W = 0.90, p < .001, W = 0.90, p < .001, and W = 0.93, p < .001, respectively), RR commitment (W = 0.82, p < .001, W = 0.86, p < .001, and W = 0.85, p < .001, respectively) according to Shapiro-Wilk tests. The SWS in Time 1 (W = 0.98, p = .006) and Time 2 (W = 0.99, p = .002) were non-normal distributed but turned out to be normally distributed in Time 3 (W = 0.99, p = .123).

In the group of women, the sanctification of RR mean score ranged from 3.85 to 4.14, the skewness from -0.05 to -0.16, and the kurtosis from -1.15 to -1.29. The RR satisfaction mean score ranged from 4.05 to 4.11, the skewness from -0.98 to -1.12, and the kurtosis from 0.83 to 1.26. The RR commitment mean score ranged from 7.58 to 7.78, the skewness from -1.07 to -1.35, and the kurtosis from 0.17 to 1.34. The SWS mean score ranged from 4.96 to 5.05, the skewness from -0.03 to -0.47, and the kurtosis from -0.61 to 0.11. At each point in time, the distributions were

¹ In describing results, the romantic relationship will be presented as aberration RR.

² Satisfaction with sacrifice will be presented as aberration SWS.

significantly non-normal for the variables: the sanctification of the RR (W = 0.95, p < .001, W = 0.94, p < .001, and W = 0.94, p < .001, respectively), RR satisfaction (W = 0.86, p < .001, W = 0.87, p < .001, and W = 0.90, p < .001, respectively), RR commitment (W = 0.77, p < .001, W = 0.79, p < .001, and W = 0.84, p < .001, respectively) according to Shapiro-Wilk tests. The SWS in Time 1 (W = 0.98, p = .088) and Time 2 (W = 0.96, p = .009) were non-normal distributed but turned out to be normally distributed in Time 3 (W = 0.99, p = .455).

In the group of men, the sanctification of RR mean score ranged from 3.70 to 3.79, the skewness from -0.04 to -0.10, and the kurtosis from -1.09 to -1.29. The RR satisfaction mean score ranged from 3.83 to 4.86, the skewness from -0.78 to -0.95, and the kurtosis from -0.07 to 0.87. The RR commitment mean score ranged from 7.22 to 7.63, the skewness from -1.46 to -1.73, and the kurtosis from 1.84 to 3.30. The SWS mean score ranged from 4.91 to 5.22, the skewness from -0.38 to 0.04, and the kurtosis from -0.03 to -0.86. At each point in time, the distributions were significantly non-normal for the variables: the sanctification of the RR (W = 0.95, p < .001, W = 0.95, p < .001, and W = 0.96, p < .001, respectively), RR satisfaction (W = 0.92, p < .001, W = 0.78, p < .001, and W = 0.94, p < .001, respectively) according to Shapiro-Wilk tests. The SWS in Time 1 (W = 0.98, p = .099) and Time 2 (W = 0.98, p = .102), and Time 3 (W = 0.98, p = .304) turned out to be normally distributed.

In the longitudinal approach in the total group (dyads), the sanctification of RR mean score ranged from 3.81 to 4.00, the skewness from -0.05 to -0.11, and the kurtosis from -1.06 to -1.13. The RR satisfaction mean score ranged from 4.06 to 4.16, the skewness from -0.99 to -1.27, and the kurtosis from 1.23 to 1.90. The RR commitment mean score ranged from 7.62 to 7.78, the skewness from -1.40 to -1.65, and the kurtosis from 1.73 to 3.15. The SWS mean score ranged from 5.02 to 5.10, the skewness from -0.05 to -0.38, and the kurtosis from -0.31 to -0.43. At each point in time, the distributions were significantly non-normal for the variables: sanctification of the RR (W = 0.94, p < .001, W = 0.95, p < .001, and W = 0.94, p < .001, respectively), RR satisfaction (W = 0.86, p < .001, W = 0.79, p < .001, and W = 0.84, p < .001, respectively) according to Shapiro-Wilk tests. The SWS in Time 1 (W = 0.98, p = .009) and Time 2 (W = 0.96, p = .002) were non-normal distributed but turned out to be normally distributed in Time 3 (W = 0.99, p = .444).

In the group of women, the sanctification of RR mean score ranged from 4.02 to 4.07, the skewness from -0.15 to -0.15, and the kurtosis from -1.05 to -1.17. The RR satisfaction mean score ranged from 4.14 to 4.19, the skewness from -1.20 to -1.46, and the kurtosis from 1.90 to 2.76.

The RR commitment mean score ranged from 7.82 to 7.95, the skewness from -1.23 to -1.63, and the kurtosis from 0.85 to 2.75. The SWS mean score ranged from 4.98 to 5.16, the skewness from -0.05 to -0.49, and the kurtosis from -0.30 to 0.45. At each point in time, the distributions were significantly non-normal for the variables: sanctification of the RR (W = 0.95, p < .001, W = 0.94, p < .001, and W = 0.94, p < .001, respectively), RR satisfaction (W = 0.86, p < .001, W = 0.87, p < .001, and W = 0.90, p < .001, respectively), RR commitment (W = 0.77, p < .001, W = 0.79, p < .001, and W = 0.84, p < .001, respectively) according to Shapiro-Wilk tests. The SWS in Time 1 (W = 0.98, p = .008) and Time 2 (W = 0.96, p = .002) were non-normal distributed but turned out to be normally distributed in Time 3 (W = 0.99, p = .445).

In the group of men, the sanctification of RR mean score ranged from 3.60 to 3.93, the skewness from -0.16 to 0.10, and the kurtosis from -1.07 to -1.27. The RR satisfaction mean score ranged from 3.95 to 4.12, the skewness from -0.79 to -1.25, and the kurtosis from -1.58 to 0.13. The RR commitment mean score ranged from 7.38 to 7.66, the skewness from -1.65 to -2.04, and the kurtosis from 2.85 to 5.78. The SWS mean score ranged from 5.05 to 5.30, the skewness from -0.02 to -0.25, and the kurtosis from -0.62 to -0.32. At each point in time, the distributions were significantly non-normal for the variables: the sanctification of the RR (W = 0.95, p < .001, W = 0.95, p < .001, and W = 0.95, p < .001, respectively), RR satisfaction (W = 0.75, p < .001, W = 0.78, p < .001, and W = 0.81, p < .001, respectively) according to Shapiro-Wilk tests. The SWS in Time 1 (W = 0.98, p = .099) and Time 2 (W = 0.98, p = .102), and Time 3 (W = 0.98, p = .304) turned out to be normally distributed.

Table 7

1				•																				
	Total Sample $N_{Participants} = 810$ $(N_{Dyads} = 405)$ Cross-Sectional Data Set																							
Variable				Ti	ime 1							Tim	e 2							Time	e 3			
				N_{Particip}	_{pants} = 81	0					N	Participan	$_{\rm ts} = 374$						$N_{\rm H}$	Participants	, = 228			
				(N _{Dya}	$_{\rm ds} = 405$)					(NDyads	= 187)						(1	V _{Dyads} =	- 114)			
	Min	Max	М	SD	SKE	KRT	α	ω	Min	Max	М	SD	SKE	KRT	α	ω	Min	Max	M	SD	SKE	KRT	α	ω
Dyads																								
Sanctification of RR	1.00	7.00	3.92	1.77	-0.07	-1.13	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	3.80	1.84	-0.05	-1.25	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	3.89	1.77	-0.11	-1.06	.98	.98
RR Satisfaction	1.29	5.00	4.04	0.69	-0.88	0.64	.86	.86	1.29	5.00	3.94	0.72	-0.98	0.61	.88	.88	1.57	5.00	4.06	0.69	-1.01	1.13	.87	.87
RR Commitment	2.25	9.00	7.63	1.39	-1.46	1.80	.90	.90	2.00	9.00	7.40	1.40	-1.33	1.77	.89	.89	2.75	9.00	7.70	1.30	-1.25	1.04	.91	.91
SWS	1.00	7.00	5.15	1.06	-0.46	0.16	.80	.79	2.17	7.00	4.98	1.06	-0.12	-0.71	.83	.82	2.17	7.00	5.03	1.00	-0.05	-0.57	.78	.78
Women																								
Sanctification of RR	1.00	7.00	4.14	1.87	-0.16	-1.15	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	3.85	1.91	-0.05	-1.29	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	4.00	1.87	-0.15	-1.15	.98	.98
RR Satisfaction	1.29	5.00	4.10	0.74	-0.98	0.83	.89	.90	1.29	5.00	4.05	0.75	-1.12	1.26	.90	.90	1.57	5.00	4.11	0.73	-1.07	1.15	.90	.9(
RR Commitment	2.25	9.00	7.77	1.44	-1.35	1.34	.92	.92	2.00	9.00	7.58	1.59	-1.29	1.07	.92	.92	3.75	9.00	7.78	1.34	-1.07	0.17	.92	.92
SWS	1.00	7.00	5.07	1.12	-0.47	0.11	.82	.81	2.17	7.00	5.05	1.09	-0.27	-0.61	.83	.83	2.17	7.00	4.96	1.05	-0.03	-0.59	.82	.81
Men																								
Sanctification of RR	1.00	6.60	3.70	1.65	-0.04	-1.19	.98	.98	1.00	6.70	3.75	1.76	-0.06	-1.29	.97	.97	1.00	6.60	3.79	1.66	-0.10	-1.09	.98	.98
RR Satisfaction	1.71	4.86	3.98	0.64	-0.80	0.27	.83	.82	1.86	4.71	3.83	0.67	-0.78	-0.07	.87	.87	1.71	4.86	4.02	0.65	-0.95	0.87	.85	.85
RR Commitment	2.25	8.75	7.49	1.32	-1.70	2.38	.90	.91	2.50	8.25	7.22	1.15	-1.73	3.30	.86	.88	2.75	8.75	7.63	1.26	-1.46	1.84	.91	.92
SWS	2.00	7.00	5.22	1.00	-0.38	-0.03	.78	.77	2.50	6.83	4.91	1.02	0.04	-0.86	.83	.82	3.00	7.00	5.11	0.94	-0.02	-0.79	.74	.73

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of the Studied Variables in the Cross-sectional Approach

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice; SKE – Skewness; KRT – Kurtosis; α - Cronbach's Alpha; ω – McDonald's Omega.

Table 8

												Total	Sample											
												NParticir	ants = 19	6										
												(NDva	$_{\rm ads} = 98$, in the second s										
											Lo	ngitudi	inal Dat	a Set										
Variable				Ti	ime 1							Tim	e 2							Time	e 3			
				NPartici	$_{\text{pants}} = 19$	6					N	Participan	$t_{s} = 196$						$N_{\rm H}$	Participants	= 196			
				(N_{Dy})	$_{ads} = 98)$							NDyads	= 98)						(N _{Dyads} :	= 98)			
	Min	Max	М	SD	SKE	KRT	α	ω	Min	Max	М	SD	SKE	KRT	α	ω	Min	Max	M	SD	SKE	KRT	α	ω
Dyads																								
Sanctification of RR	1.00	7.00	3.81	1.78	-0.04	-1.10	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	4.00	1.79	-0.14	-1.13	.97	.97	1.00	7.00	3.95	1.78	-0.09	-1.01	.98	.98
RR Satisfaction	1.43	5.00	4.16	0.68	-1.18	1.58	.89	.89	1.57	5.00	4.06	0.68	-1.27	1.90	.89	.90	1.57	5.00	4.09	0.66	-0.99	1.23	.86	.86
RR Commitment	2.25	9.00	7.78	1.31	-1.65	2.80	.91	.91	2.00	9.00	7.62	1.26	-1.54	3.15	.87	.87	2.75	9.00	7.74	1.26	-1.40	1.73	.91	.91
SWS	2.17	7.00	5.02	1.03	-0.29	-0.42	.80	.79	2.17	7.00	5.10	1.02	-0.38	-0.31	.85	.84	2.17	7.00	5.04	0.97	-0.05	-0.43	.78	.78
Women																								
Sanctification of RR	1.00	7.00	4.02	1.83	-0.13	-1.05	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	4.07	1.89	-0.15	-1.17	.98	.98	1.00	7.00	4.05	1.89	-0.13	-1.14	.98	.98
RR Satisfaction	1.43	5.00	4.19	0.73	-1.44	2.58	.92	.92	1.57	5.00	4.18	0.70	-1.46	2.76	.91	.91	1.57	5.00	4.14	0.70	-1.20	1.90	.90	.90
RR Commitment	3.00	9.00	7.95	1.40	-1.56	1.95	.95	.95	2.00	9.00	7.87	1.42	-1.63	2.75	.90	.90	3.75	9.00	7.82	1.29	-1.23	0.85	.92	.92
SWS	2.17	7.00	5.12	1.10	-0.27	-0.45	.84	.84	2.17	7.00	5.16	1.26	-0.49	-0.31	.88	.88	2.17	7.00	4.98	1.01	-0.05	-0.30	.82	.82
Men																								
Sanctification of RR	1.00	6.60	3.60	1.70	0.10	-1.18	.98	.98	1.00	6.70	3.93	1.70	-0.16	-1.27	.96	.96	1.00	6.60	3.85	1.67	-0.09	-1.07	.98	.98
RR Satisfaction	2.28	4.85	4.12	0.63	-0.85	0.13	.86	.85	1.87	4.71	3.95	0.65	-1.25	-1.58	.89	.89	2.14	4.85	4.04	0.61	-0.79	0.50	.85	.82
RR Commitment	2.25	8.50	7.61	1.20	-2.04	4.78	.88	.90	2.50	8.25	7.38	1.04	-2.09	5.78	.85	.88	2.75	8.75	7.66	1.24	-1.65	2.85	.91	.92
SWS	3.00	7.00	5.30	0.96	-0.25	-0.53	.75	.75	2.50	6.83	5.05	0.95	-0.27	-0.32	.81	.81	3.00	7.00	5.10	0.93	-0.02	-0.63	.74	.72

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of the Studied Variables in the Longitudinal Approach

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice; SKE – Skewness; KRT – Kurtosis; α - Cronbach's Alpha; ω – McDonald's Omega.

According to George and Mallery (2010), Hair et al. (2010), and Byrne (2010), if skewness is between -2 to +2 and kurtosis is between -7 to +7, the data should be considered to have a normal distribution. Conducted calculations showed that the skewness and kurtosis scores for all variables at each time point did not exceed these values (see Tables 7 and 8). Because of that, in the second step, I conducted Paired t-tests to reveal the discrepancy between women and men on crucial variables at three-time points. The results of the carried-out analyses are presented in Table 9.

In the cross-sectional approach, in Time 1, women reported higher sanctification of RR ($t_{808} = 3.52, p < .001, d = .25, M = 4.14$), RR satisfaction ($t_{808} = 2.95, p < .01, d = .16, M = 4.10$), RR commitment ($t_{808} = 2.86, p < .01, d = .20, M = 7.77$) than men (M = 3.70, M = 3.98, M = 7.49, respectively). In the SWS, men reported higher scores ($t_{808} = 2.01, p < .05, d = .14, M = 5.22$) than women (M = 5.07). According to Cohen's (1988) d values, the diversities were small. In Time 2, women reported higher RR satisfaction ($t_{372} = 3.05, p < .001, d = .31, M = 4.05$), RR commitment ($t_{372} = 2.52, p < .01, d = .26, M = 7.58$) than men (M = 3.83, M = 7.22, respectively). These variations were small (Cohen, 1988). The differences in the sanctification of RR ($t_{372} = 0.55, p = .581$) and SWS ($t_{372} = 1.27, p = .206$) turned out insignificant. In Time 3, I did not observe significant variation between women and men in the studied variables.

Table 9

Variable	Ti N _{Particip} (N _{Dyac}	me 1 $a_{ants} = 810$ $a_{bs} = 405$)	Ti NParticip (NDyaa	me 2 $p_{ants} = 374$ $p_{ds} = 187$	Tin $N_{ m Particip}$ ($N_{ m Dyad}$	$trac{1}{1}trac{1}{2}trac$	
	M (SD)	Significance	M(SD)	Significance	M(SD)	Significance	
Women							
1. Sanctification of RR	4.14 (1.87)		3.85 (1.91)		4.00 (1.87)		
2. RR Satisfaction	4.10 (0.74)	1-1***,	4.05 (0.75)	1-1	4.11 (0.73)	1-1	
3. RR Commitment	7.77 (1.44)	<i>d</i> = .25	7.58 (1.59)	11.5.	7.78 (1.34)	n.s.	
4. SWS	5.07 (1.12)	$2-2^{**}$	$2-2^{**}$ 5.05 (1.09) $2-2^{***}$ 4.96 (1.1		4.96 (1.05)	2-2	
Men		a = .16		<i>d</i> = .31		n.s.	
1. Sanctification of RR	3.70 (1.65)	$3-3^{***}$ d = .20	3.75 (1.76)	$3-3^{***}$ d=26	3.79 (1.66)	3-3 n.s.	
2. RR Satisfaction	3.98 (0.64) 4-4*	3.83 (0.67)	u .20	4.02 (0.65)	4-4		
3. RR Commitment	7.49 (1.32)	32) $d = .14$ 7.22 (4-4 n.s.	7.63 (1.26)	n.s.	
4. SWS	5.22 (1.00)		4.91 (1.02)		5.11 (0.94)		

Sex Differences Between the Studied Variables in the Cross-sectional Approach

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice. The *p*-value denotes all-group comparison, while results in parentheses denote multiple-group comparison with the Bonferroni correction; n.s. = non-significant; d = effect size (d Cohen). ***p < .001; *p < .01; *p < .05.
In the longitudinal approach, I observed significant differences only in Time 2 (Table 10). Women reported higher RR satisfaction ($t_{192} = 2.34$, p < .05, d = .30, M = 4.18) and RR commitment ($t_{192} = 2.66$, p < .01, d = .38, M = 7.87) than men (M = 3.95 and M = 7.38, respectively).

Table 10

Sex Differences Between the Studied Variables in the Longitudinal Approach

Variable			Time N _{Particip} (N _{Dya}	e 1, 2, 3 e 1, 2, 3 e 196 e 100 e		
	Ti	me 1	Ti	me 2	Time 3	
	M (SD)	Significance	M(SD)	Significance	M(SD)	Significance
Women						
1. Sanctification of RR	4.02 (1.83)		4.07 (1.89)		4.05 (1.89)	
2. RR Satisfaction	4.19 (0.73)	1-1	4.18 (0.70)	1-1	4.14 (0.70)	1-1
3. RR Commitment	7.95 (1.40)	n.s.	7.87 (1.42)	11.5.	7.82 (1.29)	n.s.
4. SWS	5.12 (1.10)	2-2	5.16 (1.26)	2-2*	4.98 (1.01)	2-2
Men		11.8.		d = .30		11.8.
1. Sanctification of RR	3.60 (1.70)	3-3 n.s.	3.93 (1.70)	$3-3^{**}$ d=.04	3.85 (1.67)	3-3 n.s.
2. RR Satisfaction	4.12 (0.63)	4-4	3.95 (0.65)		4.04 (0.61)	4-4
3. RR Commitment	7.61 (1.20)	n.s.	7.38 (1.04)	4-4 n.s.	7.66 (1.24)	n.s.
4. SWS	5.30 (0.96)		5.05 (0.95)		5.10 (0.93)	

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice. The p-value denotes all-group comparison, while results in parentheses denote multiple-group comparison with the Bonferroni correction; n.s. = non-significant; d = effect size (d Cohen). ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05

Next, a repeated-measures ANOVA was performed to evaluate the effect of Time (1, 2, and 3) on the studied variables. The analysis was carried out on longitudinal data, including a sample consisting of 98 couples who completed a set of questionaries three times, i.e., in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 (16 of the 114 couples at Time 3 did not respond at Time 2 and were therefore excluded from the analyses). The mean, standard deviations, and results of the conducted analyses are presented in Table 11. In the group of women, the effect of Time on the sanctification of RR ($F_{(2,194)} = 0.91$, p = .810), RR satisfaction ($F_{(2,194)} = 0.55$, p = .566), RR commitment ($F_{(2,194)} = 0.93$, p = .384), and SWS ($F_{(2,194)} = 3.04$, p = .056) were insignificant.

The effect of Time (1, 2, and 3) on the studied variables was observed in the group of men. In the case of the sanctification of RR, Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been met, $\chi^2(2) = 5.23$, p = .073, and the effect of Time on the sanctification of RR was significant at the .05 level, $F_{(2,194)} = 9.49$, p < .001, partial $\eta^2 = .08$. The contrast test indicated that the effect had a quadratic function $F_{(1,97)} = 9.46$, p < .01, partial $\eta^2 = .09$ (Figure 9). Post-hoc pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the sanctification of RR score was significantly lower at Time 1 (M = 3.60) than at Time 2 (p < .001; M = 3.93) and Time 3 (p = .020; M = 3.85).

In the case of the RR satisfaction, Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated, $\chi^2(2) = 16.95$, p < .001, therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Huynh-Feldt estimates of sphericity ($\varepsilon = .85$), and the effect of Time on the RR satisfaction was significant at the .05 level, $F_{(2,170)} = 6.04$, p = .004, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. The contrast test indicated that the effect a quadratic function $F_{(1,97)} = 6.70$, p < .05, partial $\eta^2 = .06$ (Figure 9). Post-hoc pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the RR satisfaction score was significantly higher at Time 1 (M = 4.12) than at Time 2 (p = .009; M = 3.95).

In the case of the RR commitment, Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated, $\chi^2(2) = 28.63$, p < .001, therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Huynh-Feldt estimates of sphericity ($\varepsilon = .81$), and the effect of Time on the RR commitment was significant at the .05 level, $F_{(2,157)} = 7.01$, p = .003, partial $\eta^2 = .07$. The contrast test indicated that the effect had a quadratic function $F_{(1,97)} = 9.08$, p < .01, partial $\eta^2 = .09$ (Figure 9). Post-hoc pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the RR commitment score was significantly lower at Time 2 (M = 7.38) than at Time 1 (p = .039; M = 7.61), and Time 3 (p = .005; M = 7.66).

Finally, in the case of the SWS, Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been met, $\chi^2(2) = 3.84$, p = .146, and the effect of Time on the SWS was significant at the .05 level, $F_{(2,194)} = 6.99$, p = .001, partial $\eta^2 = .07$. The contrast test indicated that the effect had a quadratic function $F_{(1,97)} = 4.97$, p < .05, partial $\eta^2 = .05$ (Figure 9). Post-hoc pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the SWS score was significantly higher at Time 1 (M = 5.30) than at Time 2 (p = .002; M = 5.05), and Time 3 (p = .006; M = 5.10). In summary, the eta square (η^2) indicated that Time had a negligible effect on the tested variables (Cohen, 1988).

Intra-group Differences	Between the	e Studied V	/ariables
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Variable	Time 1, 2, 3 $N_{\text{Participants}} = 196$ $(N_{\text{Dyads}} = 98)$					
	Time 1 M (SD)	Time 2 M (SD)	Time 3 M (SD)	Significance		
Women						
1. Sanctification of RR	4.02 (1.83)	4.07 (1.89)	4.05 (1.89)	$1_{T1} - 1_{T2} - 1_{T3}$ n.s.		
2. RR Satisfaction	4.19 (0.73)	4.18 (0.70)	4.14 (0.70)	$2_{T1} - 2_{T2} - 2_{T3}$ n.s.		
3. RR Commitment	7.95 (1.40)	7.87 (1.42)	7.82 (1.29)	$3_{T1} - 3_{T2} - 3_{T3}$ n.s.		
4. SWS	5.12 (1.10)	5.16 (1.26)	4.98 (1.01)	$\begin{array}{c} 4_{T1} - 4_{T2} - 4_{T3} \\ n.s. \end{array}$		
Men						
1. Sanctification of RR	3.60 (1.70)	3.93 (1.70)	3.85 (1.67)	$1_{\text{T1}} - 1_{\text{T2}} - 1_{\text{T3}}$ $p < .001, \eta^2 = .08$		
2. RR Satisfaction	4.12 (0.63)	3.95 (0.65)	4.04 (0.61)	$2_{\rm T1} - 2_{\rm T2} - 2_{\rm T3}$ p = .004, η^2 = .06		
3. RR Commitment	7.61 (1.20)	7.38 (1.04)	7.66 (1.24)	$3_{T1} - 3_{T2} - 3_{T3}$ $p < .003, \eta^2 = .07$		
4. SWS	5.30 (0.96)	5.05 (0.95)	5.10 (0.93)	$4_{T1} - 4_{T2} - 4_{T3}$ $p < .001, \eta^2 = .07$		

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice. The *p*-value denotes all-group comparison, while results in parentheses denote multiple-group comparison with the Bonferroni correction; n.s. = non-significant; η^2 = eta square effect size.

Figure 9

The Effect of Time on the Studied Variables in the Group of Men



After all, I assessed the internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega of the studied variables at each point in total (dyads), women, and men groups. The results are presented in Tables 7 (p. 106) and 8 (p. 107). Generally, the tested variables achieved excellent internal consistency from .97 to .98 for the Sanctification of RR, from .83 to 90. for RR Satisfaction, from .86 to .92 for RR Commitment, and from .74 to 83. for SWS. The following paragraph will present the results of the correlation analyses.

4.2 Correlations

The Pearson correlations between the studied variables among women and men groups and between them were calculated in the cross-sectional (Table 12) and longitudinal approach (Table 13).

In a group of women, at each point of time (Time 1, 2, and 3), the greater sanctification of RR was associated with greater RR satisfaction (r = .26, p < .001; r = .35, p < .001; r = .27, p < .01, respectively), RR commitment (r = .37, p < .001; r = .44, p < .001; r = .44, p < .001, respectively) and SWS (r = .40, p < .001; r = .34, p < .001; r = .25, p < .001, respectively). The greater SWS at each point of time (Time 1, 2, and 3) were correlated with greater RR satisfaction (r = .54, p < .001; r = .48, p < .001; r = .53, p < .001, respectively), and RR commitment (r = .55, p < .001; r = .57, p < .001; r = .58, p < .001, respectively).

In a group of men, at each point of time (Time 1, 2, and 3), the greater sanctification of RR was also correlated with greater RR satisfaction (r = .19, p < .001; r = .32, p < .001; r = .17, p < .05, respectively), RR commitment (r = .31, p < .001; r = .43, p < .001; r = .35, p < .001, respectively), and SWS (r = .30, p < .001; r = .41, p < .001; r = .29, p < .001, respectively). The greater SWS at each point of time (Time 1, 2, and 3) were linked with greater RR satisfaction (r = .56, p < .001; r = .54, p < .001; r = .46, p < .001, respectively), and RR commitment (r = .54, p < .001; r = .53, p < .001, respectively).

There were strong correlations between women and men in the sanctification of RR (from r = .80, p < .001 in Time 3 to r = .85, p < .001 in Time 2), RR satisfaction (from r = .68, p < .001 in Time 3 to r = .80, p < .001 in Time 1), RR commitment (from r = .81, p < .001 in Time 2 to r = .83, p < .001 in Time 3), and SWS (from r = .60, p < .001 in Time 3 to r = .73, p < .001 in Time 1).

Considering Lee and Preacher's (2013) procedure for calculating the test of the difference between two dependent correlations with one variable in common and using Diedenhofen and Musch's (2015) *cocor* package for the statistical comparison of correlations in R (R Core Team, 2024), I found that, in a group of women in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 the correlations between sanctification of RR and RR commitment (r = .37, p < .001; r = .44, p < .001; r = .44, p < .001, respectively) were stronger than this between sanctification of RR and RR satisfaction (z-test = 3.32, p < .001, r = .26, p < .001; z-test = 1.87, p = .031, r = .35, p < .001; z-test = 2.55, p = .001, r = .27, p < .01, respectively). In a group of men, I observed similar results. the correlations between sanctification of RR and RR commitment (r = .31, p < .001; r = .43, p < .001; r = .35, p < .001, respectively) were stronger than those between sanctification of RR and RR satisfaction (z-test = 3.23, p < .001, r = .19, p < .001; z-test = 2.11, p = .018, r = .32, p < .001; z-test = 2.48, p = .001, r = .17, p < .05, respectively). These results indicate that the sanctification of RR is more related to RR commitment than RR satisfaction.

Table 12

The Results of the *r*-Pearson Correlation Between the Studied Variables in the Cross-sectional Approach

	Variable	1	2	3	4
Tim	te 1 ($N_{\rm Dyads} = 405$)				
1	Sanctification of RR	.83***	.19***	.31***	.30***
2	RR Satisfaction	.26***	.80***	.70***	.56***
3	RR Commitment	.37***	.75***	.82***	.54***
4	SWS	.40***	.54***	.55***	.73***
Tim	$e \ 2 \ (N_{\rm Dyads} = 187)$				
1	Sanctification of RR	.85***	.32***	.43***	.41***
2	RR Satisfaction	.35***	.77***	.70***	.54***
3	RR Commitment	.44***	.74***	.81***	.58***
4	SWS	.34***	.48***	.57***	.71***
Tim	e 3 ($N_{\text{Dyads}} = 114$)				
1	Sanctification of RR	.80***	.17*	.35***	.29***
2	RR Satisfaction	.27**	.68***	.68***	.46***
3	RR Commitment	.44***	.71***	.83***	.53***
4	SWS	.35***	.53***	.58***	.60***

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS –Satisfaction with Sacrifice; Correlations for women appear in the upper portion of the matrix and for men in the lower portion. Intraclass correlations are provided on the diagonal in bold font.

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

In the longitudinal approach ($N_{Dyads} = 98$), in a group of women, the Pearson correlations showed that the greater sanctification of RR was associated with greater RR satisfaction, RR commitment, and SWS at each time point (Time 1, 2, and 3). In a group of men, like women, greater sanctification of RR was associated with greater RR commitment and SWS at each time point (Time 1, 2, and 3) but with greater RR satisfaction only in Time 2. There were also strong correlations between women and men in all the studied variables. The detailed results of the analyses are presented in Table 13 below.

The Results of the *r*-Pearson Correlation Between the Studied Variables in the Longitudinal Approach ($N_{Dyads} = 98$)

	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Sanctification of RRT1	.81***	.87***	.87***	.10	.16	.02	.24*	.27**	.24**	.43***	.40***	.31**
2	Sanctification of RRT2	.88***	.85***	.91***	.20*	.26**	.10	.30**	.40***	.30***	.49***	.48***	.37***
3	Sanctification of RRT3	.92***	.93***	.80***	.19	.23*	.13	.32***	.37***	.34***	.42***	.42***	.35***
4	RR Satisfaction _{T1}	.32*	.24*	.30**	.66***	.63***	.82***	.68***	.53***	.66***	.51***	.45***	.53***
5	RR Satisfaction _{T2}	.26*	.29***	.27**	.73***	.73***	.69***	.53***	.71***	.58***	.38***	.58***	.44***
6	RR Satisfaction _{T3}	.24*	.17	.29**	.82***	.72***	.63***	.56***	.48***	.64***	.35***	.37***	.46***
7	RR Commitment _{T1}	.47***	.43***	.45***	.76***	.60***	.61***	.76***	.68***	.89***	.53***	.55***	.49***
8	RR Commitment _{T2}	.45***	.46***	.46***	.62***	.77***	.55***	.78***	.82***	.72***	.46***	.61***	.44***
9	RR Commitment _{T3}	.42***	.36***	.45***	.64***	.58***	.68***	.82***	.78***	.82***	.51***	.52***	.53***
10	SWS _{T1}	.49***	.43***	.46***	.58***	.50***	.50***	.63***	.53***	.59***	.68***	.72***	.79***
11	SWS _{T2}	.44***	.44***	.43***	.47***	.56***	.40***	.54***	.62***	.56***	.76***	.65***	.72***
12	SWS _{T3}	.35***	.32***	.42***	.54***	.45***	.58***	.56***	.49***	.63***	.83***	.68***	.60***

Note. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice; T – Time 1, 2, 3. Correlations for women appear in the upper portion of the matrix and for men in the lower portion. Intraclass correlations are provided on the diagonal in bold font. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

4.3 Results of the Tested Hypotheses (Effects) in Models 1 and 2

Hypotheses analyzing the direct and indirect associations between the studied variables (sanctification of the romantic relationship, romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice) were tested in the Actor-Partner Interdependence Models (APIM; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) and the Actor-Partner Interdependence Models Extended to Mediation (APIMeM; Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) by using the relatively new MEDYAD software (Coutts et al., 2019).

The APIM and APIMeM might be estimated using structural equation modeling (SEM) and ordinary least squares regression (OLSR) in programs such as AMOS, LISREL, or Mplus. Coutts et al. (2019), relying on the similarity between dyadic analysis using SEM and OLSR, developed MEDYAD, an easy-to-use computational tool for SPSS that conducts dyadic APIM and APIMeM analysis with distinguishable dyadic data. MEYDYAD generates the same results as an SEM program, estimates path coefficients using OLS regression, and makes inferences about indirect effects through percentile bootstrap confidence intervals. Comparison to SEM and OLS allows the conduct and analysis of contrasts of indirect effects (Coutts et al., 2019).

According to Kenny et al.'s (2020) handbook titled "Dyadic Data Analysis" and Coutts et al.'s (2019) considerations, the APIM and APIMeM models are saturated, meaning that they have zero degrees of freedom and fit perfectly to many measures used in SEM ($\chi^2(0) = 0$, p = 0, TLI = 1, CFI = 1, NFI = 1, SRMR = 0, and RMSEA = 0). Because of this, no measures of fit can be obtained and might not be reported in the APIM and APIMeM analyses (Kenny et al., 2020). Additionally, Coutts et al. (2019, p. 638) emphasized: "Our perspective is that in a mediation analysis, it is the estimation of effects (mostly the indirect effects) that matters."

Finally, all studied variables were standardized, and the standardized regression coefficients (β) presented the associations between the tested variables in Models 1 and 2 (Kenny et al., 2020). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to obtain the 90% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI). The direct and indirect effects (hypotheses) in Models 1 and 2 will first be tested separately at three-time points (Time 1, 2, and 3) in a cross-sectional approach and then in a longitudinal approach.

4.3.1 Direct and Indirect Associations Between the Sanctification of Romantic Relationships and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction and the Mediating Role of Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 1)

In the first step, the hypotheses (H1.1_w, H1.1_M, H1.2_w, H1.2_M) analyzing the direct actor and partner effects between the sanctification of RR and RR satisfaction were tested in APIM models separately at three-time points in a cross-sectional approach. The results of all analyses are presented in Tables 14, 15, and Figure 10.

The chi-square statistic tests of distinguishability were used to test if gender (women and men) makes a statistically meaningful difference. A model comparison was performed between a model with distinguishable members and a model with indistinguishable members in the R program (R Core Team, 2024) with a *lavaan* package (Rosseel, 2012). The overall tests of distinguishability were: $\chi^2(6) = 147.06$, p < .001 for Time 1, $\chi^2(6) = 48.78$, p < .001 for Time 2, and $\chi^2(6) = 15.11$, p = .019 for Time 3. Because these tests of distinguishability were statistically significant, partners can be statistically distinguished based on the variable gender.

At Time 1 ($N_{\text{Dyads}} = 405$), the variance of the errors for the women and men were .51 and .39, respectively. The R squared (R^2) for RR Satisfaction for the women was .07 (p < .001), and for the men .04 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR satisfaction controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .80 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. Only one significant direct actor effect was observed (H1.1w), i.e., women's sanctification of RR \rightarrow women's RR satisfaction ($\beta = .38, p < .001, 90\%$ CI [0.083-0.214]).

At Time 2 ($N_{\text{Dyads}} = 187$), the variance of the errors for the women and men were .48 and .40, respectively. The R² for RR Satisfaction for the women was .12 (p < .001), and for the men .11 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR satisfaction controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .75 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. No significant direct actor and partner effects were observed.

At Time 3 ($N_{Dyads} = 114$), the variance of the errors for the women and men were .48 and .41, respectively. The R² for RR Satisfaction for the women was .08 (p = .011), and for the men .04 (p > .05). The partial intraclass correlation for RR satisfaction controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .67 and was statistically

significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. No significant direct actor and partner effects were observed. Table 15 summarizes the confirmed direct hypotheses (effect) at the three-time points in the cross-sectional approach.

Table 14

Results of Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (Model 1. A) in Three-time Points

Hypothesis	Effect		DE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Time 1 (N _{Dy}	ads = 405)			
H1.1 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_{-}T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.38	0.083 - 0.214
H1.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.04	-0.050 - 0.080
$H1.2_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.17	-0.001 - 0.115
H1.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	13	-0.131 - 0.017
Time 2 (N _{Dy}	ads = 187)			
$H1.1_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.26	-0.005 - 0.200
H1.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.22	-0.013 - 0.178
$H1.2_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.12	-0.047 - 0.129
H1.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.10	-0.063 - 0.148
Time 3 (N_{Dy}	ads = 114)			
$H1.1_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.23	-0.008 - 0.188
H1.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.04	-0.068 - 0.117
$H1.2_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.17	-0.031 - 0.148
H1.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.06	-0.086 - 0.135

Note. Table values are standardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; DE – Direct Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (Model 1. A) at Three-time Points



Table 15

The Confirmed Direct Hypothesis (Effect) at Three-Time Points in The Cross-sectional Approach (Model 1. A)

Hypothesis	Effect		Time 1 $(N_{Dyads} = 405)$	Time 2 $(N_{Dyads} = 187)$	Time 3 $(N_{Dyads} = 114)$
H1.1w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	-	-
H1.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{M_{-}T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	-	-	-
H1.2w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
H1.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction $_{W_{-}T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
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Note. "+" – the confirmed hypothesis (effect).

In the second step, the eight indirect effects (two Actor \rightarrow Actor [A \rightarrow A], two Partner \rightarrow Partner [P \rightarrow P], two Actor \rightarrow Partner [A \rightarrow P], and two Partner \rightarrow Actor [P \rightarrow A]) relating to research hypotheses (H1.3_w, H1.3_M, H1.4_w, H1.4_M, H1.5_w, H1.5_M, H1.6_w, H1.6_M, respectively) testing the associations between the sanctification of RR and RR satisfaction through satisfaction with sacrifice (SWS) were tested examined including using the APIMeM. These relationships were tested in a cross-sectional approach, using three samples obtained at T1, T2, and T3, respectively. The results of all analyses are presented in Tables 18, 19 and Figure 11 (pp. 124 - 126).

At Time 1 ($N_{Dyads} = 405$), the R² for SWS and RR satisfaction for women were .16 (p < .001), .31 (p < .001), and for men .09 (p < .001), .33 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .73 (p < .001), and for RR satisfaction (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .80 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

Table 18 and Figure 11 (see Time 1) reported two significant A→A and A→P indirect effects (IE). Specifically in the A→A effects, women's ($\beta = .49$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.338-0.652]) and men's ($\beta = .30$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.134-0.462]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their own RR satisfaction (women's $\beta = .25$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.171-0.335] and men's ($\beta = .28$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.216-0.349]). These indirect effects (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1}→SWS_{W_T1}→RR Satisfaction_{W_T1} and Sanctification of RR_{M_T1}→SWS_{M_T1}→RR Satisfaction_{M_T1}) were statistically significant: IE = .12, 90% CI [0.068-0.191] and IE = .08, 90% CI [0.034-0.136] for women's and men's, and confirmed hypotheses H1.3_w, and H1.3_m, respectively.

Two A→P indirect effects were also observed. Namely, women's ($\beta = .49$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.338-0.652]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their men's ($\beta = .10$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.033-0.172] RR satisfaction. A similar effect was obtained in a men group, that is, men's ($\beta = .30$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.134-0.462]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was related to their women's ($\beta = .16$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.086-0.243] RR satisfaction. These indirect effects (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1}→SWS_{W_T1}→RR Satisfaction_{M_T1} and Sanctification of RR_{M_T1}→SWS_{M_T1}→RR Satisfaction_{W_T1} is the satisfaction of CI [0.015-

0.093] and IE = .08, 90% CI [0.017-0.090] for women's and men's, and confirmed hypotheses $H1.5_W$, and $H1.5_M$, respectively.

Next, the contrasts comparing significant indirect actor effects and actor/partner effects were calculated (Table 16). The contrast between actor effects (i.e., Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2) was insignificant (Effect [E] = .041, Boot SE = .056, 90% CI [-0.068-0.191]). Alternatively, contrasts between actor and partner effects showed that the actor effects were greater than the partner's. Mainly, women's sanctification of RR had a higher effect on her RR satisfaction through the mediation of her SWS (Indirect Effect 1) compared to the effect exerted by women's sanctification of RR on men's RR satisfaction through the mediation of women's SWS (Indirect Effect 3), E = .074, Boot SE = .028, 90% CI (0.034-0.123). Similarly, men's sanctification of RR had a greater effect on their RR satisfaction through the mediation of their SWS (Indirect Effect 8) compared to the effect exerted by men's sanctification of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of their SWS (Indirect Effect 8) compared to the effect exerted by men's sanctification of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of their SWS (Indirect Effect 8) compared to the effect exerted by men's sanctification of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of their SWS (Indirect Effect 8) compared to the effect exerted by men's sanctification of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of the satisfaction through the mediation of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of the satisfaction throug

Table 16

The Contrast Between Indirect Actor and Actor-Partner's Effects in Time 1 (Model 1. B)

Indirect Effects	Effect	Boot SE	90% CI Lower – Upper				
Contrast between Actor Effects							
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2	.041	.056	[-0.068] – [0.191]				
Contrast between Actor-Partner Effects							
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 3	.074	.028	[0.034] – [0.123]				
Indirect Effect 4 - Indirect Effect 2	035	.017	[-0.065] – [-0.010]				
Note. Boot SE = Bootstrap Standard Error. CI = Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.							

Indirect Effect 1 = Sanctification of $RR_{W T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction_{W T1}

Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of RR_{M T1} \rightarrow SWS_{M T1} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{M T1}

Indirect Effect 3 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction_{M_T1}

Indirect Effect 4 = Sanctification of $RR_{M_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction_{W_T1}

At Time 2 ($N_{Dyads} = 187$), the R² for SWS and RR satisfaction for women were .12 (p < .001), .29 (p < .001), and for men .17 (p < .001), .32 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .70 (p < .001), and for RR satisfaction (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .71 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR Satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

Table 18 and Figure 11 (see Time 2) reported two significant $A \rightarrow A$ and one $A \rightarrow P$ indirect effects. The $A \rightarrow A$ effects were similar to those in Time 1. Women's ($\beta = .32$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.071-0.573]) and men's ($\beta = .56$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.321-0.806]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their own RR satisfaction (women's $\beta = .20$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.088-0.319] and men's ($\beta = .33$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.227-0.437]). These indirect effects (Sanctification of RR_{W_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{W_T2} and Sanctification of RR_{M_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{M_T2}) were statistically significant: IE = .07, 90% CI [0.010-0.144] and IE = .19, 90% CI [0.102-0.273] for women's and men's, and confirmed hypotheses H1.3_W, and H1.3_M, respectively. Compared to Time 2, only one $A \rightarrow P$ indirect effect was observed. Namely, men's ($\beta = .56$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.321-0.806]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was related to their women's ($\beta = .15$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.027-0.266] RR satisfaction. This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{M_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{W_T2}) was statistically significant: IE = .08, 90% CI [0.008-0.158] for men's, and confirmed hypotheses H1.5_M.

Next, the contrasts between significant indirect actor and actor/partner effects were calculated (Table 17). The contrast between actor effects (i.e., Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2) was insignificant (E = -.122, SE = .076, 90% CI [-0.239-0.008]). Alternatively, contrasts between the actor and partner effects showed that the actor effects were greater than the partner's. Mainly, men's sanctification of RR had a higher effect on their RR satisfaction through the mediation of their SWS (Indirect Effect 2) compared to the effect exerted by men's sanctification of RR on women's RR satisfaction through the mediation of men's SWS (Indirect Effect 3), E = -.010, Boot SE = .017, 90% CI ([-0.179] - [-0.042]).

Table 17

The Contrast Between Indirect Actor and Actor-Partner's Effects in Time 2 (Model 1. I	B)
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Indirect Effects	Effect	Boot SE	90% CI Lower – Upper			
Contrast between Actor Effects						
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2	122	.076	[-0.239] – [0.008]			
Contrast between Actor-Partner Effects						
Indirect Effect 3 - Indirect Effect 2	010	.017	[-0.179] – [-0.042]			
Note. SE = Bootstrap Standard Error. CI = Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold. Indirect Effect 1 = Sanctification of RRw $\pi_2 \rightarrow SWSw \pi_2 \rightarrow RR$ Satisfactionw π_2						

Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of $RR_{M_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction_{M_T2}

Indirect Effect 3 = Sanctification of $RR_{M_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction_{W_T2}

At Time 3 ($N_{Dyads} = 114$), the R² for SWS and RR satisfaction for women were .13 (p < .01), .30 (p < .001), and for men .10 (p < .01), .23 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .62 (p < .001), and for RR satisfaction (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and wen) was .56 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR Satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

Table 18 and Figure 11 (see Time 3) reported that there was only one significant A \rightarrow A indirect effect. Similar to Time 1 and 2, women's ($\beta = .46$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.210-0.704]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their own RR satisfaction ($\beta = .34$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.215-0.465]. This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{w_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{w_T1} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{w_T1}) was statistically significant: IE = .16, 90% CI [0.055-0.255] for women's, and confirmed hypotheses H1.3_w. The contrasts comparing significant indirect were not calculated because only one indirect effect was obtained. Table 19 (p. 126) summarizes the confirmed direct hypotheses (effect) at the three-time points in the cross-sectional approach.

Results of Indirect Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 1. B) in Three-time Points

Hypothesis	Effect		IE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Time 1 (N _{Dyads} =	= 416)			
H1.3 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.12	0.068 - 0.191
H1.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.08	0.034 - 0.136
$H1.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.01	-0.027 - 0.029
$H1.4_{M}$	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	01	-0.032 - 0.005
H1.5w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1}$ \rightarrow SWS $_{W_T1}$ \rightarrow RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.05	0.015 - 0.093
H1.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1}$ \rightarrow SWS $_{M_T1}$ \rightarrow RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.05	0.017 - 0.090
H1.6 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$.01	-0.044 - 0.049
H1.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	03	-0.072 - 0.013
Time 2 (N _{Dyads} =	= 198)			
H1.3 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.07	0.010 - 0.144
H1.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.19	0.102 - 0.273
$H1.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	03	-0.073 - 0.009
$H1.4_M$	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.01	-0.016 - 0.015
$H1.5_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_{-}T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.01	-0.035 - 0.046
H1.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.08	0.008 - 0.158
H1.6 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	06	-0.132 - 0.046
H1.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow A$.01	-0.044 - 0.062
Time 3 (N _{Dyads} =	= 114)			
H1.3 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.16	0.055 - 0.255
H1.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.03	-0.027 - 0.109
$H1.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.01	-0.022 - 0.043
$H1.4_{M}$	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	02	-0.058 - 0.014
$H1.5_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_{-}T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_{-}T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.05	-0.006 - 0.127
H1.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.01	-0.015 - 0.043
H1.6w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow A$.05	-0.023 - 0.111
H1.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	05	-0.124 - 0.047

Note. Table values are unstandardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice, W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; IE – Indirect Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Indirect Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 1. B) in Three-time Points



The Confirmed Indirect Hypothesis (Effect) at Three-Time Points in The Cross-sectional Approach (Model 2. A)

Нур.	Effect		Time 1 $(N_{Dyads} = 405)$	Time 2 $(N_{Dyads} = 187)$	Time 3 $(N_{Dyads} = 114)$
H1.3w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	+	+
H1.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	+	-
$\rm H1.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
$H1.4_{M}$	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
$\mathrm{H1.5}_{\mathrm{W}}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	+	-	-
H1.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	+	+	-
H1.6w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	-	-	-
H1.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	-	-	-

Note. Hyp. – Hypothesis; "+" – the confirmed hypothesis (effect).

Finally, the hypotheses analyzing the direct and indirect actor and partner effects between the studied variables in Model 1 were tested using a longitudinal approach. The associations between the sanctification of RR and RR satisfaction were analyzed in APIM models (Model 1. A) on two longitudinal data sets: (1) 187 couples who completed a set of questionaries in Time 1 and Time 2, and (2) 114 couples who completed a set of questionaries three times (i.e., in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3) to assess the direct actor and partner effects of the sanctification of RR (Time 1) on RR satisfaction (Time 2, i.e., after three months), and the sanctification of RR (Time 1) on RR satisfaction (Time 3, i.e., after six months). The results of all analyses are presented in Table 20 and Figure 12.

The chi-square statistic tests of distinguishability were used to test if gender (women and men) makes a statistically meaningful difference. The overall tests of distinguishability were $\chi^2(6) = 143.86$, p < .001, and $\chi^2(6) = 120.86$, p < .001 for samples consisting of 187 and 114 couples, respectively. Because these tests of distinguishability were statistically significant, partners can be statistically distinguished based on the variable gender.

In the APIM model ($N_{Dyads} = 187$) tested the associations between the sanctification of RR (Time 1) and RR satisfaction (Time 2), the variance of the errors for the women and men were .49 and .41, respectively. The R² for RR satisfaction for the women was .11 (p < .001), and for the men .07 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR satisfaction controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .76 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high

score. Only one significant direct actor effect was observed (H1.1_W), i.e., women's sanctification of RR_{T1} \rightarrow women's RR satisfaction_{T2} (β = .37, p < .001, 90% CI [0.202-0.536]).

In the APIM model ($N_{Dyads} = 114$) tested the associations between the sanctification of RR (Time 1) and RR satisfaction (Time 2), the variance of the errors for the women and men were .49 and .41, respectively. The R² for RR satisfaction for the women was .07 (p < .05), and for the men .02 (p > .05). The partial intraclass correlation for RR satisfaction controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .68 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. Only one significant direct actor effect was observed (H1.1_w), i.e., women's sanctification of RR_{T1} \rightarrow women's RR satisfaction_{T3} ($\beta = .28$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.079-0.483]).

Table 20

Results of Longitudinal Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (Model 1. A)

Hypothesis	Effect		DE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Time 2 (N _{cou}	ple = 187)			••
$H1.1_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_{-}T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.37	0.202 - 0.536
H1.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.06	-0.087 - 0.210
$H1.2_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.13	-0.020 - 0.285
H1.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	14	-0.303 - 0.022
Time 3 (N _{cou}	$_{ple} = 114)$			
H1.1 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-T1}} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_{-T3}}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.28	0.079 - 0.483
H1.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	05	-0.256 - 0.093
$H1.2_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.13	-0.059 - 0.307
H1.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	11	-0.373 - 0.010

Note. Table values are standardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; DE – Direct Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Longitudinal Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (Model 1. A)



Next, the eight indirect effects (two Actor \rightarrow Actor [A \rightarrow A], two Partner \rightarrow Partner [P \rightarrow P], two Actor \rightarrow Partner [A \rightarrow P], and two Partner \rightarrow Actor [P \rightarrow A]) relating to research hypotheses (H1.3_W, H1.3_M, H1.4_W, H1.4_M, H1.5_W, H1.5_M, H1.6_W, H1.6_M, respectively) testing the associations between the sanctification of RR (measured at Time 1) and RR satisfaction (measured at Time 3) through SWS (measured at Time 2) were tested in APIMeM in a longitudinal approach. The analysis was carried out on a longitudinal data set, including a sample consisting of 98 couples who completed a set of questionaries three times, i.e., in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 (16 of the 114 couples at Time 3 did not respond at Time 2 and were therefore excluded from the analyses). The results of all analyses are presented in Table 21 and Figure 13.

In the APIMeM model, the R² for SWS and RR satisfaction for women were .16 (p < .001), .31 (p < .001), and for men .09 (p < .001), .33 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .73 (p < .001), and for RR satisfaction (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .80 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

There was one significant P \rightarrow P and P \rightarrow A indirect effect only in a group of women. Specifically in the P \rightarrow P effect, women's (β = .27, p < .05, 90% CI [0.013-0.521]) sanctification of RR in Time 1 was associated with their men's SWS in Time 2, which in turn was associated with their own RR satisfaction in Time 3 ($\beta = .20, p < .05, 90\%$ CI [0.045-0.362]. This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{W_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .06, 90% CI [0.002-0.119] and confirmed hypothesis H1.4_W. Namely, in the P \rightarrow A effect, women's ($\beta = .27, p < .05, 90\%$ CI [0.013-0.521]) sanctification of RR in Time 1 was associated with their men's SWS in Time 2, which in turn was associated with their men's RR Satisfaction in Time 3 ($\beta = .25, p < .05, 90\%$ CI [0.106-0.394]). This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{M_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .07, 90% CI [0.006-0.158] and confirmed hypothesis H1.6_W. The contrast between the obtained two effects was insignificant, E = -.012, SE = .030, 90% CI [[-0.074] - [[0.022]]).

Table 21

Hypothesis	Effect		IE	90% CI Lower – Upper
$(N_{\text{couple}} = 98)$				
$H1.3_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.08	-0.001 - 0.213
H1.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_{-}T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.04	-0.021 - 0.103
$H1.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.05	0.002 - 0.119
H1.4 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	01	-0.070 - 0.030
$\rm H1.5_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.02	-0.082 - 0.156
H1.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_{-}T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.03	-0.015 - 0.090
H1.6w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{M_T3}$	$= \mathbf{P} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.07	0.006 - 0.158
H1.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Satisfaction $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	03	-0.103 - 0.004

Results of Longitudinal Indirect Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 1. B)

Note. Table values are unstandardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice, W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; IE – Indirect Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Longitudinal Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 1. B)



4.3.2 Direct and Indirect Associations Between the Sanctification of Romantic Relationships and Romantic Relationship Commitment and the Mediating Role of Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 2)

Similar to Model 1, in the first step, the hypotheses $(H2.1_W, H2.1_M, H2.2_W, H2.2_M)$ analyzing the direct actor and partner effects between the sanctification of RR and RR commitment were tested in APIM models separately at three-time points in a cross-sectional approach. The results of all analyses are presented in Tables 22, 23 and Figure 14.

The chi-square statistic tests of distinguishability were used to test if gender (women and men) makes a statistically meaningful difference. A model comparison was performed between a model with distinguishable members and a model with indistinguishable members in the R program (R Core Team, 2024) with a *lavaan* package (Rosseel, 2012). The overall tests of distinguishability were: $\chi^2(6) = 135.07$, p < .001 for Time 1, $\chi^2(6) = 85.31$, p < .001 for Time 2, and $\chi^2(6) = 14.31$, p = .026 for Time 3. Because these tests of distinguishability were statistically significant, partners can be statistically distinguished based on the variable gender.

At Time 1 ($N_{Dyads} = 405$), the variance of the errors for the women and men were 1.77 and 1.56, respectively. The R² for RR commitment for the women was .14 (p < .001) and for the men .11 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR commitment controlling for the other

predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .82 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. Two significant direct actor effects were observed (H2.1_w, H2.1_M,), i.e., women's sanctification of RR \rightarrow women's RR commitment ($\beta = .49$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.251-0.491]) and men's sanctification of RR \rightarrow men's RR commitment ($\beta = .18$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.014-0.275]).

At Time 2 ($N_{Dyads} = 187$), the variance of the errors for the women and men were 2.02 and 1.07, respectively. The R² for RR commitment for the women was .20 (p < .001), and for the men .18 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR commitment controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .78 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. Like in Time 1, two significant direct actor effects were confirmed (H2.1_w, H2.1_M), i.e., women's sanctification of RR \rightarrow women's RR commitment ($\beta = .32$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.251-0.491]) and men's sanctification of RR \rightarrow men's RR commitment ($\beta = .40$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.014-0.275]).

At Time 3 ($N_{Dyads} = 114$), the variance of the errors for the women and men were 1.44 and 1.33, respectively. The R² for RR commitment for the women was .19 (p < .001) and for the men .15 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR commitment controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .79 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. Compared to Time 1 and 2, here only one significant direct actor effect was observed (H2.1_w), i.e., women's sanctification of RR \rightarrow women's RR commitment ($\beta = .40, p < .01, 90\%$ CI [0.141-0.484]). Table 23 summarizes the confirmed direct hypotheses (effect) at the three-time points in the cross-sectional approach.

Results of Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment (Model 2. A) at Three-time Points

Hypothesis	Effect		DE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Time 1 (N _{Dyad}	_s = 405)			
H2.1 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.49	0.251 - 0.495
H2.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_TI} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.18	0.014 - 0.275
H2.2w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.15	-0.006 - 0.223
H2.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	13	-0.253 - 0.023
Time 2 (N _{Dyad}	s = 187)			
H2.1 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.32	0.069 - 0.467
H2.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.40	0.100 - 0.414
H2.2 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.03	-0.124 - 0.165
H2.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.14	-0.094 - 0.338
Time 3 (N _{Dyad}	_{is} = 114)			
H2.1 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.40	0.141 - 0.484
H2.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.13	-0.098 - 0.288
$H2.2_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.27	-0.003 - 0.345
H2.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.05	-0.200 - 0.186

Note. Table values are standardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice, W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; DE – Direct Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment (Model 2. A) at Three-time Points



Table 23

The Confirmed Direct Hypothesis (Effect) at Three-Time Points in The Cross-sectional

Approach (Model 2. A)

Hypothesis	Effect		Time 1 $(N_{Dyads} = 405)$	Time 2 $(N_{Dyads} = 187)$	Time 3 $(N_{Dyads} = 114)$
H2.1w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	+	+
H2.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	+	-
$H2.2_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
H2.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
NT 4 661.9					

Note. "+" – the confirmed hypothesis (effect).

In the second step, the eight indirect effects (two Actor \rightarrow Actor [A \rightarrow A], two Partner \rightarrow Partner [P \rightarrow P], two Actor \rightarrow Partner [A \rightarrow P], and two Partner \rightarrow Actor [P \rightarrow A]) relating to research hypotheses (H2.3_W, H2.3_M, H2.4_W, H2.4_M, H2.5_W, H2.5_M, H2.6_W, H2.6_M, respectively) testing the associations between the sanctification of RR and RR commitment through satisfaction with sacrifice (SWS) were tested including the APIMeM models separately at three-time points in a cross-sectional approach. The results of all analyses are presented in Tables 26, 27 and Figure 15 (pp. 138-140).

At Time 1 (N_{Dyads} = 405), the R² for SWS and RR commitment for women were .16 (p < .001), .36 (p < .001), and for men .09 (p < .001), .33 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .73 (p < .001), and for RR commitment (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .76 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

Table 26 and Figure 15 (see Time 1) reported two significant A→A and A→P indirect effects. Specifically in the A→A effects, women's (β = .49, p < .001, 90% CI [0.338-0.652]) and men's (β = .30, p < .01, 90% CI [0.134-0.462]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their own RR commitment (women's β = .50, p < .001, 90% CI [0.347-0.653] and men's (β = .47, p < .001, 90% CI [0.334-0.609]). These indirect effects (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1}→SWS_{W_T1}→RR Commitment_{W_T1} and Sanctification of RR_{M_T1}→SWS_{M_T1}→RR Commitment_{M_T1}) were statistically significant: IE = .23, 90% CI [0.148-0.359] and IE = .14, 90% CI [0.056-0.229] for women's and men's, and confirmed hypotheses H2.3_W, and H2.3_M, respectively.

Two A→P indirect effects were also observed. Namely, women's ($\beta = .49$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.338-0.652]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their men's ($\beta = .24$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.096-0.384] RR commitment. A similar effect was obtained in a men group, that is, men's ($\beta = .30$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.134-0.462]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was related to their women's ($\beta = .27$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.121-0.415] RR commitment. These indirect effects (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1}→SWS_{W_T1}→RR Commitment_{M_T1} and Sanctification of RR_{M_T1}→SWS_{M_T1}→RR Commitment_{W_T1}) were statistically significant: IE = .12, 90% CI [0.051-0.201] and IE = .08, 90% CI [0.024-0.147] for women's and men's, and confirmed hypotheses H2.5_w, and H2.5_M, respectively.

Next, the contrasts comparing significant indirect actor effects and actor/partner effects were calculated (Table 24). The contrast between actor effects (i.e., Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2) was insignificant (Effect [E] = .107, Boot SE = .097, 90% CI [-0.044-0.269]). Alternatively, contrasts between actor and partner effects showed that the actor effects were greater than the partner's. Mainly, women's sanctification of RR had a higher effect on her RR commitment through the mediation of her SWS (Indirect Effect 1) compared to the effect exerted by women's sanctification of RR on men's RR commitment through the mediation of women's SWS (Indirect Effect 3), E = .128, Boot SE = .041, 90% CI (0.063-0.198). Similarly, men's sanctification of RR had a higher effect on their RR commitment through the mediation of their SWS (Indirect Effect 2) compared to the effect exerted by men's sanctification of RR on men's SWS (Indirect Effect 4), E = -.060, Boot SE = .030, 90% CI ([-0.113] - [-0.016]).

Table 24

The Contrast Between Indirect Actor and Actor-Partner's Effects in Time 1 (Model 2. B)

Indirect Effects	Effect	Boot SE	90% CI Lower – Upper		
Contrast between Actor Effects					
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2	.107	.097	[-0.044] – [0.269]		
Contrast between Actor-Partner Effects					
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 3	.128	.041	[0.063] – [0.198]		
Indirect Effect 4 - Indirect Effect 2	060	.030	[-0.113] – [-0.016]		
Note. SE = Bootstrap Standard Error. CI = Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold. Indirect Effect 1 = Sanctification of $RR_{W,T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W,T1} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment _{W,T1}					

Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of $RR_{M_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M_T1}

Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M_T1} Indirect Effect 3 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T1} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M_T1}

Indirect Effect 4 = Sanctification of $RR_{M_{T1}} \rightarrow SWS_{M_{T1}} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W T1}

At Time 2 ($N_{Dyads} = 187$), the R² for SWS and RR commitment for women were .12 (p < .001), .42 (p < .001), and for men .17 (p < .001), .40 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .70 (p < .001), and for RR commitment (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .70 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR Satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

As reported in Table 26 and Figure 15 (see Time 2), two significant $A \rightarrow A$ and two $A \rightarrow P$ indirect effects were similar to those obtained in Time 1. Women's ($\beta = .32$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.071-0.573]) and men's ($\beta = .56$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.321-0.806]) sanctification of RR was

associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their own RR commitment (women's $\beta = .50, p < .001, 90\%$ CI [0.282-0.728] and men's ($\beta = .39, p < .001, 90\%$ CI [0.226-0.561]). These indirect effects (Sanctification of $RR_{W_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W_T2} and Sanctification of $RR_{M_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M_T2}) were statistically significant: IE = .16, 90% CI [0.010-0.363] and IE = .22, 90% CI [0.088-0.400] for women's and men's and confirmed hypotheses H2.3_W and H2.3_M, respectively.

Two A \rightarrow P indirect effects were also observed. Namely, women's ($\beta = .32, p < .05, 90\%$ CI [0.071-0.573]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their men's (β = .24, p < .05, 90% CI [0.078-0.402] RR commitment. A similar effect was obtained in a men group, that is, men's ($\beta = .56$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.321-0.806]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was related to their women's (β = .36, p < .01, 90% CI [0.133-0.594] RR commitment. These indirect effects (Sanctification of RR_{W T2}→SWS_{W T2}→RR Commitment_{M T2} and Sanctification of $RR_{M T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W T2}) were statistically significant: IE = .08, 90% CI [0.008-0.198] and IE = .20, 90% CI [0.059-0.414] for women's and men's and confirmed hypotheses $H2.5_W$ and $H2.5_M$, respectively.

Next, the contrasts between significant indirect actor and actor/partner effects were calculated (Table 25). The contrast between actor effects (i.e., Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2) was insignificant (E = -.059, Boot SE = .138, 90% CI [-0.281-0.165]). Alternatively, contrasts between actor and partner effects showed that the actor effects were greater than the partner's only in a group of women. Mainly, women's sanctification of RR had a higher effect on her RR commitment through the mediation of her SWS (Indirect Effect 1) compared to the effect exerted by women's Sanctification of RR on men's RR Commitment through the mediation of women's SWS (Indirect Effect 3), E = .085, Boot SE = .054, 90% CI (0.009-0.1185). In a group of Men, the contrast (Indirect Effect 4 - Indirect Effect 2) turned out insignificant E = -.016, Boot SE = .062, 90% CI ([-0.129] - [0.079]).

Indirect Effects	Effect	Boot SE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Contrast between Actor Effects			
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2	059	.138	[-0.281] – [0.165]
Contrast between Actor-Partner Effects			
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 3	.085	.054	[0.009] – [0.185]
Indirect Effect 4 - Indirect Effect 2	016	.062	[-0.129] – [0.079]

The Contrast Between Indirect Actor and Actor-Partner's Effects in Time 2 (Model 2. B)

Note. SE = Bootstrap Standard Error. CI = Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Indirect Effect 1 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W_T2}

Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of RR_{M T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M T2} \rightarrow RR Commitment_{M T2}

Indirect Effect 3 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M_T2}

Indirect Effect 4 = Sanctification of $RR_{M_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W_T2}

At Time 3 ($N_{Dyads} = 114$), the R² for SWS and RR satisfaction for women were .13 (p < .01), .30 (p < .001), and for men .10 (p < .01), .23 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .62 (p < .001), and for RR satisfaction (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .56 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR satisfaction after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

As reported in Table 26 and Figure 15 (see Time 3), there was only one significant $A \rightarrow A$ and $A \rightarrow P$ indirect effect in a group of Women. Similar to Time 1 and 2, women's ($\beta = .46$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.210-0.704]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their own RR commitment ($\beta = .51$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.300-0.714]. This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{W_T3} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T3} \rightarrow RR Commitment_{W_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .23, 90% CI [0.059-0.415] and confirmed hypotheses H2.3_W.

The A→P indirect effect showed that women's ($\beta = .46$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.210-0.704]) sanctification of RR was associated with their own SWS, which in turn was associated with their men's ($\beta = .24$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.039-0.453] RR commitment. This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{W_T3}→SWS_{W_T3}→RR Satisfaction_{M_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .08, 90% CI [0.008-0.158] and confirmed hypotheses H2.5_w.

Next, the contrast comparing significant indirect actor/partner effect was calculated. The contrast showed that women's sanctification of RR had a higher effect on her RR commitment through the mediation of her SWS compared to the effect exerted by women's sanctification of RR on men's RR commitment through the mediation of women's SWS, E = .119, Boot SE = .061, 90% CI ([0.024] – [0.222]).

Results of Direct and Indirect Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 2. B) at Threetime Points

Hypothesis	Effect		IE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Time 1 (N _{Dyad}	$s_{s} = 405$)			
H2.3 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_{-}T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.24	0.148 - 0.359
H2.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.14	0.056 - 0.229
H2.4w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.01	-0.044 - 0.047
H2.4 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	03	-0.075 - 0.013
H2.5 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.12	0.051 - 0.201
H2.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_{-}T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.08	0.024 - 0.147
H2.6 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$.01	-0.076 - 0.079
H2.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	05	-0.138 - 0.029
Time 2 (N _{Dyad}	<i>vs</i> = 187)			
H2.3 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.16	0.010 - 0.363
H1.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.22	0.088 - 0.400
$H2.4_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	06	-0.207 - 0.035
H2.4 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.01	-0.067 - 0.094
H2.5 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.08	0.008 - 0.198
H2.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_{-}T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.20	0.059 - 0.414
H2.6 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	07	-0.203 - 0.040
H2.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= P \rightarrow A$.01	-0.133 - 0.179
Time 3 (N _{Dyad}	_{is} = 114)			
H2.3 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.23	0.059 - 0.415
H2.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.05	-0.072 - 0.242
$H2.4_{W}$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.06	-0.047 - 0.189
H2.4 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	03	-0.138 - 0.043
H2.5 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.11	0.001 - 0.253
H2.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.03	-0.052 - 0.164
H2.6 _w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow A$.09	-0.074 - 0.241
H2.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	07	-0.215 - 0.093

Note. Table values are unstandardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice, W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; IE – Indirect Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Indirect Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 2. B) at Three-time Points



 R^2 = multiple squared correlation. Figure values are standardized regression coefficients (β). * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

The Confirmed Indirect Hypothesis (Effect) at Three-Time Points in The Cross-sectional Approach (Model 2. B)

Нур.	Effect		Time 1 $(N_{Dyads} = 405)$	Time 2 $(N_{Dyads} = 187)$	Time 3 $(N_{Dyads} = 114)$
H2.3w	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_{-}T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	+	+
H2.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	+	+	-
$\rm H2.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_{-}T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
$H2.4_{M}$	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	-	-	-
$\rm H2.5_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	+	+	+
H2.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	+	+	-
H2.6 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	-	-	-
H2.6 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T1}$	$= P \rightarrow A$	-	-	-

Note. Hyp. – Hypothesis; "+" – the confirmed hypothesis (effect).

Finally, the hypotheses analyzing the direct and indirect actor and partner effects between the studied variables in Model 2 were tested using a longitudinal approach. The associations between the sanctification of RR and RR commitment were analyzed in APIM models (Model 2. A) on two longitudinal data sets: (1) 187 couples who completed a set of questionaries in Time 1 and Time 2, and (2) 114 couples who completed a set of questionaries three times (i.e., in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3) to assess the direct actor and partner effects of the sanctification of RR (Time 1) on RR commitment (Time 2, i.e., after three months), and the sanctification of RR (Time 1) on RR commitment (Time 3, i.e., after six months). The results of all analyses are presented in Table 28 and Figure 16.

The chi-square statistic tests of distinguishability were used to test if gender (women and men) makes a statistically meaningful difference. The overall tests of distinguishability were $\chi^2(6) = 179.34$, p < .001, and $\chi^2(6) = 122.77$, p < .001 for samples consisting of 187 and 114 couples, respectively. Because these tests of distinguishability were statistically significant, partners can be statistically distinguished based on the variable gender.

In the APIM model ($N_{Dyads} = 187$) tested the associations between the sanctification of RR (Time 1) and RR commitment (Time 2), the variance of the errors for the women and men were 2.14 and 1.56, respectively. The R² of RR commitment for the women was .15 (p < .001), and for the men, .11 (p < .001). The partial intraclass correlation for RR commitment controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .79 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have

a high score. One significant direct $A \rightarrow A$ and $A \rightarrow P$ effect was observed (H2.1_w and H2.2_w), i.e., women's sanctification of RR_{T1} \rightarrow women's RR commitment_{T2} (β = .49, p < .001, 90% CI [0.434-0.967]) and women's sanctification of RR_{T1} \rightarrow men's RR commitment_{T2} (β = .26, p < .05, 90% CI [0.009-0.521]).

In the APIM model ($N_{Dyadds} = 114$) tested the associations between the sanctification of RR (Time 1) and RR commitment (Time 2), the variance of the errors for the women and men were 1.49 and 1.38, respectively. The R² of RR commitment for the women was .17 (p < .001), and for the Men .12 (p < .01). The partial intraclass correlation for RR commitment controlling for the other predictor variables (RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .81 and was statistically significant (p < .001). Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variable RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score. Similarity, one significant direct A \rightarrow A and A \rightarrow P effect was observed (H2.1_w and H2.2_w), i.e., women's sanctification of RR_{T1} \rightarrow women's RR commitment_{T2} ($\beta = .46$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.329-0.918]) and women's sanctification of RR_{T1} \rightarrow men's RR commitment_{T2} ($\beta = .42$, p < .01, 90% CI [0.182-0.878]).

Table 28

Results of Longitudinal Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment (Model 2. A)

Hypothesis	Effect		DE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Time 2 (N _{coupl}	e = 187)			
H2.1 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.49	0.434 - 0.967
H2.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.12	-0.109 - 0.388
H2.2 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T2}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{P}$.26	0.009 - 0.521
H2.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{W_T2}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	12	-0.528 - 0.150
Time 3 (N _{coupl}	e = 114)			
H2.1 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.46	0.329 - 0.918
H2.1 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$	07	-0.449 - 0.214
H2.2 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T3} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= \mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{P}$.42	0.182 - 0.878
H2.2 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T3} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$	05	-0.496 - 0.170

Note. Table values are standardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice, W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; DE – Direct Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Longitudinal Direct Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment (Model 2. A)



Next, the eight indirect effects (two Actor \rightarrow Actor $[A \rightarrow A]$, two Partner \rightarrow Partner $[P \rightarrow P]$, two Actor \rightarrow Partner $[A \rightarrow P]$, and two Partner \rightarrow Actor $[P \rightarrow A]$) relating to research hypotheses (H1.3_W, H1.3_M, H1.4_W, H1.4_M, H1.5_W, H1.5_M, H1.6_W, H1.6_M, respectively) testing the associations between the sanctification of RR (measured at Time 1) and RR commitment (measured at Time 3) through SWS (measured at Time 2) were tested in APIMeM model in a longitudinal approach. The analysis was carried out on a longitudinal data set, including a sample consisting of 98 couples who completed a set of questionaries three times, i.e., in Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 (16 of the 114 couples at Time 3 did not respond at Time 2 and were therefore excluded from the analyses). The results of all studies are presented in Table 29 and Figure 17.

In the APIMeM, the R² for SWS and RR commitment for women were .21 (p < .001), .39 (p < .001), and for men .18 (p < .001), .30 (p < .001), respectively. The partial intraclass correlation for SWS (controlling for the other predictor variables, i.e., RR sanctification of women and men) was equal to .60 (p < .001), and for RR commitment (controlling such predictors as RR sanctification of women and men, and SWS of women and men) was .75 (p < .001) Thus, when one partner of the dyad scores high on the variables SWS and RR commitment after controlling for the predictor variables, the other partner also tends to have a high score.

There was one significant $A \rightarrow A$, $P \rightarrow P$, and $P \rightarrow A$ indirect effect only in a group of women. Specifically in the $A \rightarrow A$ effect, women's ($\beta = .68$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.404-0.952]) sanctification of RR in Time 1 was associated with their own SWS in Time 2, which in turn was associated with their own RR commitment in Time 3 (women's $\beta = .37$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.130-0.602]. This indirect effect (Sanctification of $RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .25, 90% CI [0.066-0.555] and confirmed hypotheses H2.3w.

In the P→P effect, women's ($\beta = .27, p < .05, 90\%$ CI [0.013-0.521]) sanctification of RR in Time 1 was associated with their men's SWS in Time 2, which in turn was associated with their own RR commitment in Time 3 ($\beta = .40, p < .05, 90\%$ CI [0.142-0.652]. This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1}→SWS_{M_T2}→RR Commitment_{W_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .11, 90% CI [0.007-0.242] and confirmed hypothesis H2.4_W.

Namely, in the P \rightarrow A effect, women's ($\beta = .27$, p < .05, 90% CI [0.013-0.521]) sanctification of RR in Time 1 was associated with their men's SWS in Time 2, which in turn was associated with their men's RR commitment in Time 3 ($\beta = .56$, p < .001, 90% CI [0.299-0.828]). This indirect effect (Sanctification of RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR Commitment_{M_T3}) was statistically significant: IE = .15, 90% CI [0.024-0.334] and confirmed hypothesis H2.6_W.

Table 29

Results of Longitudinal Indirect Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 2. B)

Hypothesis	Effect		IE	90% CI Lower – Upper
$(N_{\text{couple}} = 98)$				
H2.3 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.25	0.066 - 0.555
H2.3 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow A$.09	-0.044 - 0.228
$H2.4_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$.11	0.007 - 0.242
H2.4 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= P \rightarrow P$	02	-0.127 - 0.039
$\rm H2.5_W$	Sanctification of RR $_{W_{-}T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{W_{-}T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_{-}T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.05	-0.112 - 0.271
H2.5 _M	Sanctification of RR $_{M_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{W_T3}$	$= A \rightarrow P$.06	-0.028 - 0.177
H2.6 _W	Sanctification of RR $_{W_T1} \rightarrow$ SWS $_{M_T2} \rightarrow$ RR Commitment $_{M_T3}$	$= \mathbf{P} \rightarrow \mathbf{A}$.15	0.024 - 0.334
H2.6 _M	Sanctification of RR M T1 \rightarrow SWS W T2 \rightarrow RR Commitment W T3	$= P \rightarrow A$	09	-0.276 - 0.002

Note. Table values are unstandardized coefficients. RR – Romantic Relationship; SWS – Satisfaction with Sacrifice, W – Women, M – Men, T – Time 1, 2, 3; A – Actor Effect; P – Partner Effect; IE – Indirect Effect; CI – Confidence Interval. Significant effects are shown in bold.

Results of Longitudinal Effects on the Sanctification of Romantic Relationship on Romantic Relationship Commitment Through Satisfaction with Sacrifice (Model 2. B)



Finally, the contrasts comparing significant indirect actor effects and actor/partner effects were calculated (Table 30). All the contrasts were insignificant.

Table 30

The Contrast Between Indirect Actor-Partner's Effects in Longitudinal Study

(Model 2. B)

Indirect Effects	Effect	Boot SE	90% CI Lower – Upper
Contrast between Actor and Actor-Partner Effects			
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 2	.142	.175	[-0.093] – [0.485]
Indirect Effect 1 - Indirect Effect 3	.097	.169	[-0.156] – [0.401]
Indirect Effect 2 - Indirect Effect 3	044	.050	[-0.150] – [0.001]
Note. SE = Bootstrap Standard Error. CI = Confidence Interval.			

Indirect Effect 1 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W_T3} Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_T2} \rightarrow SWS_{M_T2} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{W_T3}

Indirect Effect 2 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_{12}} \rightarrow SWS_{M_{12}} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M 13} Indirect Effect 3 = Sanctification of $RR_{W_{12}} \rightarrow SWS_{M_{12}} \rightarrow RR$ Commitment_{M 13}

4.4 Sociodemographic Differences

The scores of sanctifications of romantic relationships, satisfaction with romantic relationships and commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice were compared in different sociodemographic groups in a Sample of 810 partners who completed the set of questionaries at Time 1. As noted by Bedyńska and Cypryanska (2013), to use a parametric test, i.e. a one-way
ANOVA, to compare results between three or more groups, three assumptions should be met: (1) the dependent variable should be measured at the interval or ratio level (i.e., they are continuous), (2) the values of the dependent variable follow a normal distribution in each group, and (3) the variation within each group being compared should be similar for every group, that is, homogeneity of variance should be obtained (Bedyńska & Cypryańska, 2013).

Three variables to be compared (RR sanctification, RR satisfaction and commitment, and SWS) in the presented study are continuous and met the first assumption. According to George and Mallery (2010), Hair et al. (2010), and Bryne (2010), if skewness is between -2 to +2 and kurtosis is between -7 to +7, the data should be considered to have a normal distribution. As reported in Table 24, the scores of dependent variables did not cross these values, so they met the second assumption. I used Levene's test to assess the homogeneity of variance (Levene, 1960). This test tells us if *k* samples have equal variances. If it is significant (p < .05), the *k* variances are significantly different. The mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, and results of Levene's test are presented below in Table 31.

In summary, I used a one-way ANOVA to test for sociodemographic differences between the study variables if all three assumptions were met. If the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not met, I used the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test. The results of the analyses are shown in Table 32 on pages 153-154.

Table 31

Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, and Results of Levene's Test of Study Variables in Sociodemographic Groups

Variable	Sanctification of Romantic Relationship				Romantic Relationship Satisfaction				F	Satisfaction with Sacrifice						
	M (SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test	M (SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test	M (SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test	M(SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test
Age																
1. 18-34	3.78 (1.79)	0.01	-1.17	Г —	4.17 (063)	-1.02	1.13	F –	7.92 (1.17)	-1.93	4.30	F -	5.24 (0.98)	-0.53	0.44	F _
2.35-54	4.23 (1.78)	-0.29	-1.03	$F_{(2, 807)} = 5.95,$	3.85 (0.74)	-0.61	0.04	$F_{(2, 807)} - 4.85,$	7.26 (1.57)	-1.00	.018	$F_{(2, 807)} = 25.15,$	5.04 (1.18)	-0.34	-0.21	$r_{(2, 807)} - 7.53,$
3.55+	3.58 (1.38)	0.65	0.24	<i>p</i> < .001	3.68 (0.74)	-0.94	0.81	<i>p</i> < .001	6.77 (1.51)	-0.86	0.72	<i>p</i> < .001	4.71 (0.98)	-0.15	0.41	<i>p</i> < .001
Education																
1. Elementary	4.05 (1.28)	-0.34	0.01	F.a	4.01 (0.58)	-0.17	-0.64	$F_{(2, 807)} = 0.53,$ p = .591	7.23 (1.31)	-0.38	-1.03	$F_{(2, 807)} = 0.16,$ p = .851	4.78 (1.11)	-0.19	0.35	$F_{(2, 807)} = 2.56,$
2. Secondary	3.54 (1.66)	0.31	-0.93	$r_{(2,807)} - 7.63,$	4.04 (0.67)	-0.62	-0.26		7.55 (1.37)	-1.30	1.13		5.10 (0.91)	0.08	-0.84	
3. High	4.10 (1.83)	-0.26	-1.12	<i>p</i> < .001	4.04 (0.71)	-1.03	1.05		7.70 (1.39)	-1.64	2.51		5.19 (1.23)	-0.63	0.39	p = .078
Professional situation																
1. Working	3.97 (1.78)	-0.13	-1.12		3.91 (0.73)	-0.82	0.48		7.45 (1.50)	-1.26	0.94		5.09 (1.11)	-0.38	-0.12	
2. Working and studying	3.41 (1.72)	0.28	-1.04		4.21 (0.60)	-0.90	0.63	$\begin{array}{c} 0.63 \\ F_{(4,\ 805)} = \\ 2.03 \\ 3.76, \end{array}$	7.82 (1.22)	-1.80	3.85	$F_{(4, 805)} =$ 10.39, p < .001	5.23 (0.97)	-0.24	-0.40	$F_{(4, 805)} = 5.82,$ p < .001
3. Parental leave	4.97 (1.27)	-0.20	-0.74	$F_{(4, 805)} =$ 3.70,	4.16 (0.58)	-1.14	2.03		8.21 (0.72)	-1.22	1.59		5.31 (0.69)	-0.11	-0.43	
4. Unemployed	4.68 (1.71)	-0.31	-1.13	<i>p</i> < .001	4.00 (0.67)	-0.40	-0.76	<i>p</i> < .001	7.86 (1.11)	-1.02	0.33		5.18 (1.31)	-1.09	1.34	
5. Retirement/Pension	3.89 (1.33)	0.38	-1.33		3.97 (0.73)	-0.96	0.17	7	7.50 (1.77)	-1.45	0.88		5.24 (0.63)	0.64	-1.68	
Income in PLN/month																
1.0 - 2000	4.14 (1.80)	-0.18	-1.18	_	4.09 (0.64)	-0.88	0.93	_	7.73 (1.27)	-1.84	4.02	_	5.14 (0.93)	-0.27	0.01	$F_{(2, 807)} =$ 5.46, p < .001
$2.2\ 001 - 4\ 000$	3.76 (1.76)	0.03	-1.06	$F_{(2, 807)} = 0.54,$	3.95 (0.74)	-0.78	0.35	$F_{(2, 807)} = 4.34,$	7.45 (1.47)	-1.23	0.51	$F_{(2, 807)} =$ 9.55, p < .001	5.08 (1.32)	-0.44	0.14	
3. Above 4 001	3.92 (1.73)	-0.14	-1.12	<i>p</i> = .597	4.17 (0.65)	-1.01	0.83	<i>p</i> < .01	7.89 (1.31)	-1.97	3.74		5.32 (1.09)	-0.67	0.11	
Religiosity																
1. Deeply religious	5.77 (1.02)	-1.17	1.40	$F_{(4, 805)} =$	4.22 (0.60)	-0.89	0.45	$F_{(4, 805)} =$	8.19 (1.00)	-2.78	10.24	$F_{(4, 805)} =$	5.62 (0.91)	-0.47	0.13	$F_{(4, 805)} =$
2. Religious	4.91 (1.45)	-0.26	-0.26	3.40, p < .01	4.06 (0.66)	-0.95	1.15	2.45, p < .05	7.77 (1.25)	-1.56	2.03	9.50, $p < .001$	5.29 (1.03)	-0.65	0.89	1.74, p = .139

Variable	Sanctification of Romantic Relationship				Romantic Relationship Satisfaction				A		Satisfaction with Sacrifice					
	M(SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test	M (SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test	M (SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test	M(SD)	SKE	KRT	Levene's Test
3. Indifferent	2.39 (1.31)	1.22	1.27		4.05 (0.72)	-0.90	0.78		7.54 (1.49)	-1.50	2.01		4.92 (1.11)	-0.28	-0.28	
4. Weakly religious	2.87 (1.24)	0.35	-0.14		3.96 (0.73)	-0.72	0.09		7.34 (1.45)	-1.02	0.11		4.91 (0.99)	-0.04	-0.40	
5. Non-religious	1.88 (0.83)	0.67	-0.42		3.72 (0.80)	-0.50	-0.79		6.70 (1.71)	-0.76	-0.06		4.67 (1.06)	-0.80	-0.06	
Residence																
1. Village	4.17 (1.81)	-0.18	-1.19	F	4.02 (0.70)	-0.80	0.45	5 $F_{(2, 807)} =$ 3 4.78,	7.69 (1.28)	-1.34	1.35	$F_{(2, 807)} =$ 14.68, p < .001	5.10 (1.02)	-0.35	-0.01	$F_{(2, 807)} = 5.92, \ p < .01$
2. City below 50,000	4.09 (1.81)	-0.19	-1.07	$r_{(2,807)} = 0.81,$	3.88 (0.80)	-0.85	0.43		7.21 (1.68)	-1.05	0.15		4.96 (1.24)	-0.46	0.11	
3. City over 50,001	3.75 (1.73)	0.01	-1.10	<i>p</i> = .445	4.11 (0.64)	-0.82 0.41	0.41	<i>p</i> < .01	7.75 (1.28)	-1.64	2.81		5.23 (1.01)	-0.41	-0.05	
Kind of relationship																
1. Marriage	4.54 (1.68)	-0.47	-0.74	F	4.04 (0.69)	-0.93	0.60	F	7.34 (1.32)	-1.56	2.12	F	5.22 (1.05)	-0.42	0.01	F
2. Cohabitation	3.20 (1.69)	0.31	-1.00	$F_{(2, 807)} =$ 1.27, p = .282	3.86 (0.72)	-0.60	0.48	$ \begin{array}{c} F_{(2, 807)} = \\ 8 & 8.00, \\ p < .001 \\ 0 \end{array} $	7.23 (1.57)	-1.05	0.48	$F_{(2, 807)} = 17.63,$ p < .001	4.92 (1.06)	-0.37	0.08	P(2, 807) = 0.06, p = .940
3. Fiancé	3.41 (1.56)	0.30	-0.90		4.33 (0.53)	-1.21	1.70		7.99 (1.08)	-2.04	5.32		5.27 (1.08)	-0.76	0.97	
Family sizes																
1. No children	3.63 (1.72)	0.08	-1.10		4.12 (0.68)	-0.10	0.91		7.74 (1.32)	-1.71	2.99		5.16 (1.03)	-0.40	0.06	
2. One child	3.69 (1.57)	0.01	-0.69	$F_{(3, 806)} =$	3.72 (0.73)	-0.65	0.24	$F_{(3, 806)} =$	7.05 (1.53)	-0.72	-0.37	$F_{(3, 806)} =$ 5.74, p < .001	4.84 (1.05)	-0.49	0.21	$F_{(3, 806)} =$ 0.14, p = .932
3. Two children	4.41 (1.82)	-0.38	-1.14	5.16, p < .001	3.97 (0.70)	-0.80	0.55	2.26, p = .080	7.54 (1.49)	-1.45	1.33		5.13 (1.09)	-0.47	0.36	
4. Three and more children	5.37 (1.50)	-1.37	1.67		4.16 (0.55)	-0.45	-0.57		8.06 (0.96)	-1.21	0.70		5.60 (1.07)	-1.12	1.69	
Relationship duration, years																
1.3-10	3.81 (1.76)	-0.01	-1.23	$F_{\alpha} =$	4.09 (0.67)	-0.91	0.65	$E_{\alpha \alpha \sigma \sigma} =$	7.73 (1.31)	-1.66	2.78	$E_{const} =$	5.18 (1.00)	-0.40	0.03	$E_{const} =$
2.11-20	4.35 (1.74)	-0.36	-0.92	0.37 ,	3.85 (0.75)	-0.85	0.73	1.50,	7.29 (1.62)	-0.99	0.04	9.55,	4.98 (1.29)	-0.43	-0.19	5.70,
3.20+	4.03 (1.83)	-0.03	-1.21	<i>p</i> = .094	3.94 (0.71)	-0.63	0.16	p = .223	7.45 (1.43)	-1.13	0.45	<i>p</i> < .001	5.15 (1.06)	-0.47	0.45	<i>p</i> < .01

Note. SKE – Skewness; KRT – Kurtosis; F – Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance. The insignificant effects of Levene's Test are bolded (i.e., homogeneity of variance was met).

In the age groups, Levene's test was significant for all tested variables (p < .05), indicating that homogeneity of variance was violated. Thus, in the analysis, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. This test showed that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($\gamma^2(2) = 12.35$, $p < .001, \eta^2 = .01$), RR satisfaction ($\chi^2(2) = 50.14, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06$), RR commitment ($\chi^2(2) = 10^{-1}$) 55.80, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .07$), and SWS ($\chi^2(2) = 14.75$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .02$) scores across three age groups. The distribution of scores on studied variables did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that: the mean ranks RR sanctification of participants aged 35-54 ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 444.99$) was significantly higher than that of aged 18-34 ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 388.59$, p = .004) and aged 55+ ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 356.72$, p = .048); the mean ranks RR satisfaction of participants aged 18-34 ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 451.00$) was significantly higher than that of aged 35-54 ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 343.86, p < .001$) and aged 55+ ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 285.88, p < .001$); the mean ranks RR commitment of participants aged 18-34 ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 451.29$) was significantly higher than that of aged 35-54 ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 349.43$, p < .001) and aged 55+ ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 251.54$, p < .001); and mean ranks SWS of participants aged 18-34 ($M_{Rank} = 425.54$) was significantly higher than that of aged 55+ ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 301.39, p < .001$).

In the education groups, Levene's test was significant only for RR sanctification (p < .001), indicating that homogeneity of variance was violated. Thus, in this analysis, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. For the other variables, Levene's test confirmed the homogeneity of variance (p > .05); therefore, one-way ANOVA was calculated. The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated that there was a significant difference in RR sanctification ($\chi^2(2) = 18.67$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .02$) scores across three education groups. The distribution of scores on RR sanctification did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that the mean ranks RR sanctification of participants having high education (M_{Rank} = 431.23) was significantly greater than those having secondary education ($M_{Rank} = 355.36$, p = .001). One-way ANOVA showed that there were insignificant differences in RR satisfaction ($F_{2, 807} = 0.04$, p = .959, $\eta^2 = .01$), RR commitment ($F_{2, 807} = 2.48$, p = .085, $\eta^2 = .01$), and SWS ($F_{2, 807} = 2.78$, p = .062, $\eta^2 = .01$).

In the professional situation groups, Levene's test was significant for all tested variables (p < .05), indicating that homogeneity of variance was violated. Thus, in the analysis, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. This test revealed that there were significant differences in RR sanctification $(\chi^2(4) = 44.29, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06)$, RR satisfaction $(\chi^2(4) = 22.32, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03)$, and RR commitment $(\chi^2(2) = 16.90, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03)$ scores across five professional situation groups.

The differences were insignificant in SWS ($\chi^2(4) = 3.32, p = .506$). The distribution of scores on studied variables did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that: the mean ranks RR sanctification of working and studying participants ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 339.59$) was significantly lower than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 412.01, p = .001$), parental leave ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 543.04, p < .001$), and unemployed ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 505.04, p < .001$); the mean ranks RR satisfaction of working and studying participants ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 462.93$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 376.79, p < .001$); the mean ranks RR commitment of parental leave participants ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 494.40$) was significantly higher than that of working ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 380.35, p < .009$).

In the income groups, Levene's test was insignificant only for RR sanctification (p = .597), indicating that homogeneity of variance was met. Thus, in this analysis, the one-way ANOVA was used. For the other variables, Levene's test did not confirm the homogeneity of variance (p < .05); therefore, The Kruskal-Wallis Test was calculated. One-way ANOVA showed that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($F_{2, 807} = 3.50$, p = .031, $\eta^2 = .01$). Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that the mean RR sanctification of the participants having income between 0 - 2000 PLN/month (M = 4.14) was significantly higher than those having income between 2 001 – 4 000 PLN/month (M = 3.76, p = .025). The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated that there were significant differences in RR satisfaction ($\chi^2(2) = 11.74$, p = .003, $\eta^2 = .02$), RR commitment ($\chi^2(2) = 13.23$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .01$), and SWS ($\chi^2(2) = 7.04$, p = .030, $\eta^2 = .02$) scores across three income groups. The distribution of scores on tested variables did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that the mean ranks of RR satisfaction, RR commitment, and SWS of participants having income above 4 001 PLN/month ($M_{Rank} = 450.93$, $M_{Rank} = 458.70$, $M_{Rank} = 449.19$, respectively) were significantly higher than those having income between 2 001 – 4 000 PLN/month (M_{Rank} = $378.62, p = .003, M_{\text{Rank}} = 379.58, p < .001, M_{\text{Rank}} = 392.11, p = .029$, respectively).

In the religiosity groups, Levene's test was insignificant only for SWS (p = .139), indicating that homogeneity of variance was met. Thus, in this analysis, the one-way ANOVA was used. For the other variables, Levene's test did not confirm the homogeneity of variance (p < .05); therefore, The Kruskal-Wallis Test was calculated. The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($\chi^2(4) = 457.32$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .57$), RR satisfaction ($\chi^2(2) = 15.69$, p = .003, $\eta^2 = .02$), and RR commitment ($\chi^2(2) = 47.75$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .001$, $\eta^2 = .000$, η^2

not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that: the mean ranks RR sanctification of participants who described themselves as deeply religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 652.44$) was significantly higher than that of those described as religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 535.90$, p = .012), indifferent ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 206.54$, p < .001), weakly religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 264.08, p < .001$), and non-religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 141.46, p < .001$); the mean ranks RR satisfaction of participants described themselves as deeply religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 466.73$) was significantly higher than that those described as non-religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 313.40, p = .002$); the mean ranks RR commitment of participants described themselves as deeply religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 511.67$) was significantly higher than that those described as religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 423.54$, p = .012), indifferent ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 394.92$, p = .001), weakly religious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 349.83$, p < .001), and nonreligious ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 261.65$, p < .001). One-way ANOVA showed that there were significant differences in SWS ($F_{4,805} = 12.91$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .06$). Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that the mean SWS of the participants who described themselves as deeply religious (M = 5.62) was significantly higher than that those described as indifferent (M = 4.92, p < .001), weakly religious (M = 4.91, p < .001), and non-religious (M = 4.67, p < .001).

In the residence groups, Levene's test was insignificant only for RR sanctification (p = .445), indicating that homogeneity of variance was met. Thus, in this analysis, the one-way ANOVA was used. For the other variables, Levene's test did not confirm the homogeneity of variance (p < .05); therefore, The Kruskal-Wallis Test was calculated. One-way ANOVA showed that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($F_{2, 807} = 4.60, p = .010, \eta^2 = .01$). Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that the mean RR sanctification of the participants living in a village (M = 4.17) was significantly higher than those living in a city over 50,001 citizenships (M = 3.75, p = .022). The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated that there were significant differences in RR satisfaction ($\chi^2(2) = 9.07$, p = .011, $\eta^2 = .02$), RR commitment ($\chi^2(2)$) = 11.68, p = .003, $\eta^2 = .02$), and SWS ($\chi^2(2) = 6.33$, p = .042, $\eta^2 = .01$) scores across three residence groups. The distribution of scores on tested variables did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that the mean ranks of RR satisfaction, RR commitment, and SWS of participants living in a city below 50,000 citizenships ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 362.01$, $M_{\text{Rank}} = 357.01$, $M_{\text{Rank}} = 371.49$, respectively) were significantly lower than those living in a city over 50,000 citizenships ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 424.29, p = .009,$ $M_{\text{Rank}} = 423.29, p = .002, M_{\text{Rank}} = 422.39, p = .050$, respectively).

In the kind of relationship groups, Levene's test was significant for RR satisfaction (p < .001) and RR commitment (p < .001), indicating that homogeneity of variance was violated. Thus, in these analyses, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. For RR sanctification and SWS, Levene's test confirmed the homogeneity of variance (p = .281 and p = .940, respectively);therefore, one-way ANOVA was calculated. The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated that there were significant differences in RR satisfaction ($\chi^2(2) = 49.88$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .05$) and RR commitment $(\gamma^2(2) = 28.26, p < .001, \eta^2 = .04)$ scores across three kinds of relationships groups. The distribution of scores on RR sanctification did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that the mean ranks of RR satisfaction and RR commitment participants were cohabiting ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 340.08$ and $M_{\text{Rank}} = 343.73$, respectively) were significantly lower than those of married ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 406.13$, p = .001, and $M_{\text{Rank}} = 422.25, p = .001$, respectively) and fiancé ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 509.19, p = .001$ and $M_{\text{Rank}} = 460.60$, respectively). One-way ANOVA showed that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($F_{2, 807} = 59.53$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .13$) and SWS ($F_{2, 807} = 7.99$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .02$). Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that: the mean RR sanctification of the participants were married (M = 4.54) was significantly higher than those cohabiting (M = 3.20, p < .001) and fiancé (M = 3.41, p < .001); the mean SWS participants were cohabiting (M = 4.92) were significantly lower than those of married (M = 5.22, p = .001) and fiancé (M = 5.27, p = .001)p = .003).

In the family size groups, Levene's test was significant for RR sanctification (p < .001) and RR commitment (p < .001), indicating that homogeneity of variance was violated. Thus, in these analyses, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. For RR satisfaction and SWS, Levene's test confirmed the homogeneity of variance (p = .080 and p = .932, respectively); therefore, one-way ANOVA was calculated. The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($\chi^2(3) = 72.37$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .08$) and RR commitment ($\chi^2(3) = 31.17$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .04$) scores across four family size groups. The distribution of scores on RR sanctification did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that: the mean rank of RR sanctification participants having three and more children ($M_{Rank} = 598.60$) were significantly higher than those having two children ($M_{Rank} = 367.70$, p < .001); the mean rank of RR commitment participants having one child ($M_{Rank} = 308.38$) were significantly lower than those having two children ($M_{Rank} = 391.06$, p < .001), three and more

 $(M_{\text{Rank}} = 476.08, p < .001)$, and no having children $(M_{\text{Rank}} = 424.12, p < .001)$. One-way ANOVA showed that there were significant differences in RR satisfaction $(F_{3, 806} = 12.68, p < .001, \eta^2 = .05)$ and SWS $(F_{3, 806} = 7.42, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03)$. Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that the means of RR satisfaction and SWS participants having one child (M = 3.72 and M = 4.84) were significantly lower than those having two children (M = 3.97, p = .017 and M = 5.13, p < .01, respectively), three and more (M = 4.16, p < .001 and M = 5.60, p < .001, respectively), and no having children (M = 4.12, p < .001 and M = 5.16, p = .018, respectively).

Finally, in the relationship duration groups, Levene's test was significant for RR commitment (p < .001) and SWS (p < .01), indicating that homogeneity of variance was violated. Thus, in these analyses, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. For RR sanctification and RR satisfaction, Levene's test confirmed the homogeneity of variance (p = .694 and p = .223, respectively); therefore, one-way ANOVA was calculated. One-way ANOVA showed that there were significant differences in RR sanctification ($F_{2, 807} = 5.03$, p = .007, $\eta^2 = .01$) and RR satisfaction ($F_{2, 807} = 7.35$, p < .001, $\eta^2 = .02$). Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that: the mean of RR sanctification participants being together for 11-20 years (M = 4.35) were significantly higher than those being together for 3-10 years (M = 3.81, p = .006), but the mean of RR satisfaction participants being together for 3-10 years (M = 4.09) were significantly higher than those being together for 11-20 years (M = 3.85, p = .001). The Kruskal-Wallis Test indicated significant differences only in RR commitment ($\chi^2(2) = 7.30$, p = .026, $\eta^2 = .01$) scores across three relationship duration groups. In the SWS ($\chi^2(2) = 1.93$, p = .380) the differences were insignificant. The distribution of scores on RR commitment did not have a similar shape for each education group, so I used the mean ranks of each group in the post-hoc comparison. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's method with a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests indicated that the mean rank of RR commitment participants being together for 3-10 years ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 418.57$) was significantly higher than those being together for 11-20 years ($M_{\text{Rank}} = 365.94, p = .021$).

Table 32

Sociodemographic Differences (N = 810)

Variable	$N_{\text{Participants}} = 810$	Sanctification of Romantic Relationship			Romantic Relationship Satisfaction			Rom	antic Relatio Commitmer	onship at	Satisfaction with Sacrifice			
	n (%)	M(SD)	M _{Rank}	Significance	M (SD)	M _{Rank}	Significance	M (SD)	M _{Rank}	Significance	M(SD)	M _{Rank}	Significance	
Age														
1. 18-34	492 (60.7%)	3.78 (1.79)	388.59	(2. 2*	4.17 (063)	451.00	(2 1***	7.92 (1.17)	451.29	(3-2***,	5.24 (0.98)	425.54		
2.35-54	270 (33.3%)	4.23 (1.78)	444.99	$(3-2, 1-2^{***}),$	3.85 (0.74)	343.86	$(3-1, 2-1^{***}),$	7.26 (1.57)	349.43	$3-1^{***},$ $2-1^{***})$	5.04 (1.18)	387.49	$(3-1^{***}),$ $n^2 = 0.02$	
3. 55+	48 (5.9%)	3.58 (1.38)	356.72	$\eta^2 = .01$	3.68 (0.74)	285.88	$\eta^2 = .06$	6.77 (1.51)	251.54	$\eta^2 = .07$	4.71 (0.98)	301.39	η .02	
Education														
1. Elementary	35 (4.3%)	4.05 (1.28)	421.11		4.01 (0.58)	374.00		7.23 (1.31)	321.73		4.78 (1.11)	323.61		
2. Secondary	270 (33.3%)	3.54 (1.66)	355.36	$(2-3^{***}),$ $n^2 = 02$	4.04 (0.67)	402.66	n.s.	7.55 (1.37)	386.58	n.s.	5.10 (0.91)	386.20	n.s.	
3. High	505 (62.3%)	4.10 (1.83)	431.23	$\eta = .02$	4.04 (0.71)	409.20		7.70 (1.39)	421.42		5.19 (1.23)	421.50		
Professional situation														
1. Working	479 (59.1%)	3.97 (1.78)	412.01		3.91 (0.73)	376.79		7.45 (1.50)	380.35		5.09 (1.11)	393.94		
2. Working and studying	224 (27.7%)	3.41 (1.72)	339.59	(2-1 ^{***} ,	4.21 (0.60)	462.93		7.82 (1.22)	432.36		5.23 (0.97)	416.87		
3. Parental leave	51 (6.3%)	4.97 (1.27)	543.04	2-4 , 2-3***,	4.16 (0.58)	441.46	$(1-2^{***})$ $m^2 = 03$	8.21 (0.72)	494.40	$(1-3^{***})$ $\eta^2 = .03$	5.31 (0.69)	434.80	n.s.	
4. Unemployed	47 (5.8%)	4.68 (1.71)	505.04	$1-3^{***}$, $\eta^2 = .06$	4.00 (0.67)	388.85	$\eta^{2} = .03$	7.86 (1.11)	437.00		5.18 (1.31)	436.18		
5. Retirement/Pension	9 (1.1%)	3.89 (1.33)	400.06		3.97 (0.73)	387.50		7.50 (1.77)	407.22		5.24 (0.63)	411.39		
Income in PLN/month														
1.0 - 2000	268 (33.1%)	4.14 (1.80)	435.51		4.09 (0.64)	416.96		7.73 (1.27)	410.98		5.14 (0.93)	398.72		
$2.2\ 001 - 4\ 000$	383 (47.3%)	3.76 (1.76)	384.34	$(2-1^{*}),$ $n^2 = 01$	3.95 (0.74)	378.62	$(2-3^{***}),$ $\eta^2 = .02$	7.45 (1.47)	379.58	$(2-3^{***}),$ $\eta^2 = .02$	5.08 (1.32)	392.11	$(2-3^{***}),$ $\eta^2 = .01$	
3. Above 4 001	159 (19.6%)	3.92 (1.73)	406.22	$\eta = .01$	4.17 (0.65)	450.93		7.89 (1.31)	458.70		5.32 (1.09)	449.19		
Religiosity														
1. Deeply religious	93 (11.5%)	5.77 (1.02)	652.44	(5-4***, 5-2***,	4.22 (0.60)	466.73	$(5-1^{***})$ $\eta^2 = .02$	8.19 (1.00)	511.67	(5-3**, 5-2***,	5.62 (0.91)	510.62	(5-2***, 5-1***,	

Variable	$N_{\text{Participants}} = 810$	Sanctific F	cation of Ro Relationship	omantic	Romantic Relationship Satisfaction			Romantic Relationship Commitment			Satisfaction with Sacrifice		
	n (%)	M (SD)	M_{Rank}	Significance	M (SD)	MRank	Significance	M (SD)	MRank	Significance	M (SD)	MRank	Significance
2. Religious	350 (43.2%)	4.91 (1.45)	535.90	5-1***, 3-2***,	4.06 (0.66)	409.87		7.77 (1.25)	423.54	5-1**, 4-2**,	5.29 (1.03)	437.84	4-2***, 4-1**, 2-2***
3. Indifferent	188 (22.3%)	2.39 (1.31)	206.54	$4-2^{***}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{*}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{**}, 4-1^{*}, 4-1$	4.05 (0.72)	408.84		7.54 (1.49)	394.92	$4-1, 3-1^{***}, 2-1^*),$	4.92 (1.11)	358.33	3-2, $3-1^{***}),$ $\eta^2 = .06$
4. Weakly religious	131 (16.2%)	2.87 (1.24)	264.08	$2-1^{***}$), $\eta^2 = .57$	3.96 (0.73)	379.32		7.34 (1.45)	349.83	$\eta^2 = .06$	4.91 (0.99)	345.96	
5. Non-religious	48 (5.9%)	1.88 (0.83)	141.46		3.72 (0.80)	313.40		6.70 (1.71)	261.65		4.67 (1.06)	313.26	
Residence													
1. Village	188 (23.2%)	4.17 (1.81)	438.36		4.02 (0.70)	397.85		7.69 (1.28)	408.15		5.10 (1.02)	393.48	
2. City below 50,000	162 (20.0%)	4.09 (1.81)	428.35	$(3-1^{**}),$ $n^2 = 01$	3.88 (0.80)	361.02	$(2-3^{**}),$ $n^2 = 0.2$	7.21 (1.68)	351.07	$(2-3^{**}),$ $n^2 = .02$	4.96 (1.24)	371.49	$(2-3^*),$ $n^2 = 0.1$
3. City over 50,001	460 (56.8%)	3.75 (1.73)	384.02	η .01	4.11 (0.64)	424.29	1 .02	7.75 (1.28)	423.59	η .02	5.23 (1.01)	422.39	η .01
Kind of relationship													
1. Marriage	408 (50.4%)	4.54 (1.68)	488.09	(2 1***	4.04 (0.69)	406.13	(2-1***,	7.34 (1.32)	422.25	(2 1*** 2	5.22 (1.05)	422.30	(2.1***
2. Cohabitation	248 (30.6%)	3.20 (1.69)	312.09	$(2-1, 3-1^{***}),$	3.86 (0.72)	340.08	$2-3^{***},$ $1-3^{***})$	7.23 (1.57)	343.73	(2-1, 2- 3 ^{***}),	4.92 (1.06)	356.16	$(2-1), (2-3^{****}),$
3. Fiancé	154 (19.0%)	3.41 (1.56)	377.10	$\eta^2 = .13$	4.33 (0.53)	509.19	$\eta^2 = .05$	7.99 (1.08)	460.60	$\eta^2 = .04$	5.27 (1.08)	440.45	$\eta^2 = .02$
Family sizes													
1. No children	484 (59.8%)	3.63 (1.72)	367.70	(3-4***,	4.12 (0.68)	435.04	(2.1**	7.74 (1.32)	424.12		5.16 (1.03)	406.88	(2-1**,
2. One child	122 (15.1%)	3.69 (1.57)	373.34	2-4***, 2-3***	3.72 (0.73)	299.53	$(2-1)^{(2-1)},$ $2-4^{***},$	7.05 (1.53)	308.38	(2-1 ^{***} , 2-4 ^{***} ,	4.84 (1.05)	340.63	2-4***, 2-3**
3. Two children	136 (16.8%)	4.41 (1.82)	472.34	$1-4^{***}$,	3.97 (0.70)	380.11	$2-3^{***},$ $1-3^{**}),$	7.54 (1.49)	391.06	2-3***),	5.13 (1.09)	403.09	$1-4^{***},$
4. Three and more children	68 (8.4%)	5.37 (1.50)	598.60	$\eta^2 = .08$	4.16 (0.55)	436.15	$\eta^2 = .05$	8.06 (0.96)	476.08	$\eta^2 = .04$	5.60 (1.07)	516.89	$\eta^2 = .03$
Relationship duration, years													
1.3-10	599 (74.0%)	3.81 (1.76)	391.55		4.09 (0.67)	423.32		7.73 (1.31)	418.57		5.18 (1.00)	410.92	
2.11-20	125 (15.4%)	4.35 (1.74)	462.37	$(1-2^{**}),$ $n^2 = .01$	3.85 (0.75)	347.06	$(1-2^{***}),$ $n^2 = .02$	7.29 (1.62)	365.94	$(1-2^{**}),$ $n^2 = .01$	4.98 (1.29)	378.98	n.s.
3.20+	86 (10.6%)	4.03 (1.83)	420.00	1	3.94 (0.71)	366.28	1	7.45 (1.43)	371.97	1	5.15 (1.06)	406.28	

Note. The *p*-value denotes all-group comparison, while results in parentheses denote multiple-group comparison with the Bonferroni correction; n.s. = non-significant. ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05

Chapter V Discussion

This chapter discusses the results obtained. It consists of nine sections. The first reminds research aims and hypotheses. The second contains interpretations of gender and time differences and correlation results. The third and fourth discuss the results of Models 1 and 2, respectively. The fifth analyzes the sociodemographic differences. The sixth presents the study's limitations. The seventh provides directions for future research. The eighth shows practical implications, and the last presents a conclusion of the study.

5.1 Research Aims and Hypotheses

Romantic unions/marriages are some of the most important relationships for many people. How these relationships are created and maintained depends on various factors, e.g., political, social, economic, and also religious/spiritual. Mahoney (2013), in the Relational Spirituality Framework, presented how partners' religiousness/spirituality can be linked to various romantic relationship outcomes. In the RFS, Mahony (2013), drawing on a well-established and comprehensive theory of religion/spirituality that she adapted to family lives, delineates three recursive stages in the development of romantic relationships: (1) discovery, (2) maintaining, and (3) transforming, and three levels of mechanisms operating in these stages: (1) individual relationships with the divine/God, (2) perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, and (3) family members' relationships with the religious/spiritual community. This study included the second stage (maintenance) of developing romantic relationships and considered how the sanctification of romantic relationships (second mechanism) is associated with the quality of romantic unions in a sample of Polish heterosexual couples.

The study had four aims. First, to examine the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship (independent variable) and its quality operationalized as romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment (dependent variables). Second, to analyze the potential mechanism of these associations, including satisfaction with sacrifice as a mediator. Third, these associations will be tested using cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches, including women's and men's perspectives. Fourth, to show how different sociodemographics relate to partners' perceptions of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in their romantic relationships.

Two research models were proposed to achieve the first three aims. Model 1 analyzed the direct and indirect associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships and romantic

relationship satisfaction and the mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice. Model 2 tested the direct and indirect associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships and romantic relationship commitment and the mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice. Notably, the direct effects of the dyads approach were calculated in the Actor–Partner Interdependence Models (APIM; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011), and the indirect effects in the Actor–Partner Interdependence Extended Mediation Models (APIMeM; Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011).

The research hypotheses for both Models (1 and 2) were formulated based on the literature review and in the context of APIM and APIMeM statistical models. The APIM allows the analysis of two direct actor and partner effects. Thus, in Models 1 and 2, four hypotheses were posted (e.g., for Model 1, H1.1_w, women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction, and Model 2, H2.2_w, women's sanctification of the romantic relationship is positively associated with their partner's romantic relationship commitment). The APIMeM allows the assessment of eight simple actors and partners' indirect effects. Hence, in Models 1 and 2, eight hypotheses were formulated (e.g., for Model 1, H1.3_M, men's sanctification of romantic relationships is associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction with sacrifice, and in Model 2, H2.4_M, men's sanctification of the romantic relationship is associated with one's own romantic relationship satisfaction with sacrifice. All posted hypotheses were presented in 2.3. Research Hypotheses paragraph on p. 80.

Sanctification, as emphasized by Pargament and Mahoney (2005), is a "psychospiritual" construct and psychological process that might be present, activated, and developed under various life situations, e.g., when partners consider getting married, having a wedding anniversary, or having offspring. In such moments, sanctification can work at a given point, in the "here and now," increasing, e.g., relationship satisfaction (Mahoney et al., 1999), and in the long term, when it can motivate partners to nurture their relationships, protect, and take care of the relationship (Karyadeva, 2020; Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024). Moreover, as Mahoney et al. (2023) noted, to obtain a full and more complex view of how the sanctification of a romantic relationship is linked with the quality and stability of romantic unions, it should be studied in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches. Research so far demonstrated that whereas significant cross-sectional links exist (e.g., Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Latifa & Amelia, 2018; Latifa et al., 2021), longitudinal studies, so far few in number, have often yielded inconsistent or null findings (e.g., Cutrona et al., 2011; Brown et al., 2008; Sullivan, 2001). Because of that, the hypotheses in Models 1 and 2 were tested in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

Finally, to achieve the fourth aim of this study, sociodemographic differences between partners' perceptions of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in their romantic relationships were calculated. Such analyses were exploratory, so no hypotheses were made. Their primary goal was to determine whether various demographic variables (e.g., age, education, place of residence, duration and type of relationship, etc.) would condition the variables studied. The results provided new inspiration and set potential directions for further research.

Descriptive statistics, differences by gender and time, and correlations were also calculated before hypotheses were tested. These calculations show how partners perceive their relationship, whether time influences their perception of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice, and the primary associations between the variables. They also helped to understand better and interpret the results relating to the hypotheses. The results are discussed below.

5.2 Gender and Time Differences and Correlations Results

I began by establishing differences between men and women and between measurement points (Times 1, 2, and 3) in terms of the variables tested. Such a comparison is important because the models tested take into account couples and multiple measurements. In the cross-sectional approach, analyses of gender differences in the variables studied at Time 1 showed that women sanctified their relationships more and were more satisfied and committed to their unions than men. However, men rated their readiness to sacrifice higher. After three months (Time 2), women still were more satisfied and committed to their romantic relationships than men. I did not observe significant differences in sanctification and sacrifice at this Time. After six months (Time 3), the differences between women and men in the studied variables were insignificant. In the longitudinal approach, the only significant differences were after three months (Time 2), which showed that women were more satisfied and committed to their romantic relationships than men.

The results confirmed that women tend to invest more and be more committed to their relationships than men (Miller, 1986; Wood, 1993; Rhoades et al., 2006). However, for women, this can be associated with higher costs and their less satisfaction with having to make sacrifices (Whitton et al., 2007). Insignificant differences were obtained at Time 2 (sanctification and sacrifice) and Time 3 in cross-sectional and Times 1 and 3 in the longitudinal approach, suggesting the situation can be more complex. It is important to remember that at the three measurement points, we have essentially the same group, reduced by those who dropped out of the study. The group surveyed at Time 1 is the most diverse regarding variables describing the relationship, which may explain the relationships obtained. Previous studies have provided different results on relationship satisfaction between men and women. Among other things, they have shown that the

type of relationship can make a difference in assessing relationship satisfaction. Some studies have shown no gender differences in relationship satisfaction (Jackson et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2022), and nearly half of newlyweds' husbands and wives shared the same level of marriage quality (Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). Researchers also indicated that married couples seem more satisfied and committed to their relationships than unmarried cohabiters or re-parented couples (Janicka & Szymczak, 2019; Jose et al., 2010; Reynolds et al., 2014; Stanley et al., 2004). The analyses presented here did not control for the type of relationship (married or cohabiting) the respondents were in. Future studies should examine this.

Next, the effect of Time (1, 2, and 3) on the studied variables was evaluated. In the group of women, the effect of time on sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice was insignificant. This suggests that women are characterized by a degree of stability in the perception of their romantic relationship. The picture is different for men. The significant effect of time on the variables studied in the men's group was observed. The effects presented a quadratic function in which relationship satisfaction, commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice look like a "U" shape. But, for the sanctification of romantic relationship, it was an inverted "U." The posthoc comparisons showed that men were less likely to perceive their relationship as sacred at the beginning of the research (Time 1) than after three (Time 2) and six months (Time 3) and were less committed to their relationship three months after the start of the study (Time 2) than at first (Time 1) and last stage (Time 3). Men were more satisfied and sacrificing at the beginning (Time 1) than three months later (Time 2). Men are characterized by less stability in how they rate sanctification, relationship satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice over time. Their perception of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and making sacrifices more often and at a greater level might change due to interactions with their partner, the development of their relationships, and other factors, such as work. Stanley et al. (2004) found that married men who had cohabited premaritally with their spouses were less committed than men who had not. It is also worth noting that the differences in the intensity of the variables studied at three-time points, as with the gender differences, were small. Perhaps the results could be different and more persuasive if the time intervals were longer, for example, one or two years (see Bühler et al., 2021, Stenberg, 1986) and took into account the types of relationships.

The correlation results showed that in a group of women and men, at each time point (Time 1, 2, and 3), greater sanctification was associated with greater satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice. Greater sacrifice was also tied to greater satisfaction and commitment. In addition, there were strong positive correlations between women and men in the perception of studied variables, which means that, for example, greater women's sanctification of relationships was associated

with greater sanctification by men. These findings were in line with the findings of other authors (e.g., Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney et al., 2021; Dew et al., 2021; Monk et al., 2014). Specifically, this study extends prior findings by highlighting that the correlations between sanctification and commitment were stronger than between sanctification and satisfaction in a group of women and men. These results indicated that sanctification is a stronger predictor of the interpersonal (commitment) than the intrapersonal (satisfaction) dimension of romantic relationship quality. This very interesting result shows that sanctification better explains variables related to commitment to the relationship, i.e., what partners do and how much they care about the relationship than how they feel about it. Satisfaction refers to more cognitive rather than emotional mechanisms (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005). By sanctification, partners might give a special meaning to their romantic unions (e.g., perceive them as sacred, holy, or blessed by God/High power) and, through them, make more efforts to protect, commit, and sacrifice for their romantic unions. These findings are in line with the results of research on the function of religion, which does not always increase indicators of emotional well-being but very often helps to make life meaningful (Park, 2010, 2013; Park & Van Tongeren, 2022). Those findings were also observed in the tested effects (hypotheses) in Models 1 and 2.

5.3 Results from Model 1

Model 1 tested the direct and indirect associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships (independent variable) and romantic relationship satisfaction (dependent variable) and the mediating role of sacrifice in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

The direct actor and partner associations analyzed in APIM models in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches confirmed only one direct actor effect, that is, hypothesis H1.1_w in a group of women. Precisely, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships (measured at Time 1) was associated with greater their one's satisfaction with romantic relationships at the same time (only in Time 1 in the cross-sectional approach) and after three and six months (Time 2 and 3 in the longitudinal approach).

Next, the indirect actor and partner associations were analyzed separately using a crosssectional approach in the APIM models considering three-time points (Times 1, 2, and 3). These calculations confirmed one indirect actor (H1.3_W) and partner (H1.5_W) hypotheses in a group of women. Cross-sectionally, in Times 1, 2, and 3, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with their greater sacrifice, which was linked with their greater romantic relationship satisfaction (H1.3_W). The H1.5_W confirmed hypothesis indicated that greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with their greater sacrifice, which in turn was linked with their partner's greater satisfaction with romantic relationship. However, this hypothesis was observed only in Time 1.

Similar findings were obtained in men. The analyses confirmed one indirect actor (H1.3_M) and partner (H1.5_M) effects. Like in women, in Times 1, 2, and 3, greater men's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with their greater sacrifice, which in turn was linked with their greater romantic relationship satisfaction (H1.3_M). In addition, as with women, greater men's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with their greater sacrifice, which in turn was linked with unit relationships was associated with their greater sacrifice, which in turn was linked with their partner's greater romantic relationship satisfaction (H1.3_M). This hypothesis was also confirmed in Time 2.

Lastly, the indirect actor and partner effects were analyzed in the APIMeM models using a longitudinal approach. These calculations confirmed two indirect partner effects, that is, hypotheses H1.4_w and H1.6_w in women. Precisely, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships at the beginning of the study (Time 1) was associated with their partner's greater sacrifice after three months (Time 2), which in turn was linked with women's greater romantic relationship satisfaction after six months (Time 3; H1.4_w). Furthermore, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships at Time 1 was associated with greater their partner's romantic relationship satisfaction after six months (Time 3; H1.4_w).

The above results show the role of the sanctification of romantic relationships in predicting relationship satisfaction and present the possible mechanism of these associations. By including both partners' perspectives and cross-sectional and longitudinal designs, the results provide a complex view of the role of sanctification for romantic relationship satisfaction among Polish heterosexual couples. However, what do these findings mean, and how can they be interpreted in the light of the previous findings and conceptual Relational Spirituality Framework?

Satisfaction is an important factor in shaping the quality of relationships (Farooqi, 2014; Lakatos & Martos, 2019). This study defined relationship satisfaction as "a person's feelings and thoughts about their marriage or similar intimate relationship" (Hendrick, 1988, p. 10). The partner's feelings and thoughts change throughout the relationship. Some researchers (e.g., Carr et al., 2014; Jackson et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2022) indicated that changes in women's satisfaction might be more consequential for the couple's future well-being than changes in men's. They also indicated that women's views on relationships are thought to be more predictive than men's views of how each partner will feel in the future. These results may be expressed in the colloquial saying, "Happy wife, happy life."

Carr et al. (2014), in a study of partners who have been together for at least 39 years, showed that for a happy relationship, it is much more important for the woman to be satisfied than the man. A woman who is satisfied with her relationship gives more of herself to her man, which improves his well-being and, in turn, positively impacts their relationship. These authors also noted that men do not talk much about their relationships, so women may not know what their partners think about the relationship and how they feel about it. While conducting research, I noticed that men were less willing to participate, and it was more difficult to get their cooperation. Many couples dropped out because the men were more likely than the women not to complete the questionnaires again, i.e., at Times 2 and 3. Of course, this is standard in the research, but it can also be thought that men were not willing to talk about their romantic relationship once again in the questionnaires.

Researchers have also emphasized that the role of social structures indicates that the effective fulfillment of gender roles requires women to meet the emotional needs of family members and take responsibility for maintaining relationships (Duncombe & Marsden, 1993; Eagly, 1987). This social role of women in the relationship/family is still present and relevant in the Polish socio-cultural (still traditional) context (Kwak, 2019). Women are often expected to take care of the children and the home and maintain good relationships within the family. Men are expected to provide for the material needs of family members and look after their safety. Catholic teaching promotes such a message, and this tradition is still a mainstream religion in Poland. The traditional division of domestic roles is also still common in Poland. This is according to nationwide opinion polls. The Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS, 2018) indicated that women perform most household chores (e.g., laundry, ironing, cooking); they spend more time with their children and make more effort to combine work and family life.

Furthermore, women are also more religious and practice more regularly than men (CBOS, 2022a). Faith is more important to them. A CBOS survey (2022a) showed that faith is important to 48% of Polish women and 38% of men (Sadłoń & Stępisiewicz, 2015). Thus, females' religious beliefs might influence their perception of romantic unions. In the present study, about 72.3% of women described themselves as religious and regularly participating in religious services (at least once a week) (compared to 69.4% of men). The study conducted by Śmiałek (2024) confirmed that (intrinsic) religious orientation is a significant predictor of the sanctification of romantic relationships. Thus, this study supports the conclusion that women's views about their relationships, the perception of the relationship as unique and sacred, will likely affect couple dynamics more than men's.

The confirmed hypotheses of Model 1 are consistent and support this idea. Results showed that how women perceive their relationships is more significant for relationship quality than men's point of view, especially in the long term. However, a man's willingness to make sacrifices in a relationship also plays a crucial role. Notably, women's perception of relationships as sacred directly predicts their relationship satisfaction "here and now" and long-term (cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches, respectively). In the case of men, these associations were not observed. Most probably, sanctification may not be an essential and direct predictor of their relationship satisfaction because of their less religiousness/spirituality, or these effects were not strong enough to provide significant results (due to the decreased power of the test linked with a decreased sample). The indirect effects in the cross-sectional approaches confirmed that when women and men perceive their relationship as sacred "now and here" (e.g., due to an upcoming wedding anniversary or lovely memories linked with a partner), both their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction increases. However, this happens through their own or their partners' sacrifice. These effects were the strongest at the beginning of the study; later, not all were confirmed (probably due to the sample size). In the longitudinal approach, the effect of the woman's sanctification of the relationship on her and her partner's satisfaction with the relationship persists. It occurs through the partner's willingness to sacrifice for the relationship.

This role of sacrifice can be understood in the light of the interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). This theory emphasizes that dependency is a critical structural property of relationships, determining the extent to which partners rely on their relationship to achieve common goals (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Stanley et al., 2010). In the "now and here" perspective, when spouses perceive their relationship as something special and sacred, through sacrificing, they may feel satisfaction and be proud of being excellent and caring partners in their romantic unions. This sense that they are behaving in the "right" way, in turn, will increase their own and their partners' relationship satisfaction. Research confirmed that sacrifice is positively associated with relationships and personal well-being (e.g., Impett & Gordon, 2008; Van Lange et al., 1997; Wieselquist et al., 1999).

A man's dedication to the relationship is very important in the long run. Rusbult et al. (2004) noticed that sacrifice might also be perceived as a pro-relationship behavior. By sanctifying their romantic unions, women may perceive their partners' pro-relationship behavior more often, e.g., fulfilling household duties and helping with childcare. Men, in turn, may feel greater satisfaction with their sacrifice when their partners notice and appreciate these acts. Kogan et al. (2010) noticed that people may feel fortunate when they sacrifice to make their partner happy. Furthermore, Wieselquist et al. (1999) show that when partners perceive acts of sacrifice, they

create a climate of trust and cooperation, promoting greater relationship satisfaction over time. These results also align with other authors, showing positive associations between sacrifice and higher relationship satisfaction (e.g., Ruppel & Curran, 2012; Van Lange, et al., 1997; Wieselquist et al., 1999).

Finally, sacrifice is a behavior often driven by the motivation to provide care for the wellbeing and needs of others (Clark & Mills, 2011). This motivation may have origins in the religious meanings that partners give their romantic unions (Park, 2013). As a psychological and religious construct, the sanctification of romantic relationships might motivate partners to sacrifice for the partner/relationship in various life situations. In such moments, sanctification and the ability to sacrifice will increase their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction (Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney, 2013; Wieselquist et al., 1999). Sanctification can also motivate partners to maintain relationships (Mahoney, 2013; Karyadeva, 2020). This effect was tested and analyzed in Model 2.

5.4 Result from Model 2

Model 2 tested the direct and indirect associations between the sanctification of romantic relationships (independent variable) and romantic relationship commitment (dependent variable) and the mediating role of sacrifice in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches.

The direct actor and partner associations analyzed in APIM models in cross-sectional studies confirmed two direct actor effects: hypothesis H2.1_W in a group of women at each time point and hypothesis H2.1_M in a group of men at Times 1 and 2. Precisely, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with their own commitment to romantic relationships (H2.1_W). Similarly, greater men's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with greater their own commitment to romantic relationships (H2.1_W). In longitudinal studies, the direct actor and partner associations analyzed in APIM models confirmed only one direct actor and one partner effect in a group of women: hypothesis H2.1_W and hypothesis H2.2_W. Notably, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships (measured at Time 1) was associated with their own and their partner's greater commitment to the relationship after three and six months (Time 2 and 3, respectively).

Next, the indirect actor and partner associations were analyzed separately using a crosssectional approach in the APIM models considering three-time points (Times 1, 2, and 3). These calculations confirmed one indirect actor (H2.3_W) and partner (H2.5_W) hypotheses in a group of women. Notably, in Times 1, 2, and 3, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with greater one's own sacrifice, which in turn was linked with greater one's own romantic relationship commitment (H2.3_W). The confirmed hypothesis H2.5_W indicated that greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with greater one's own satisfaction with the sacrifice, which in turn was linked with greater their partner's romantic relationship commitment. This hypothesis was also observed at each time point.

A group of men obtained quite similar results to those in females. The calculations confirmed one indirect actor (H2.3_M) and partner (H2.5_M) hypotheses. Like in women, in Times 1 and 2, greater men's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with greater one's own sacrifice, which in turn was linked with greater one's own romantic relationship commitment (H2.3_M). In addition, as with women, greater men's sanctification of romantic relationships was associated with greater one' own satisfaction with the sacrifice, which in turn was linked with greater their partner's romantic relationship commitment (H2.5_M). However, this hypothesis was not confirmed in Time 3.

Lastly, the indirect actor and partner effects were analyzed in the APIMeM models using a longitudinal approach. These calculations confirmed one indirect actor effect and two indirect partner effects: hypotheses H2.3w, H2.4w, and H2.6w in a group of women. Precisely, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships at the beginning of the study (Time 1) was associated with greater one's own satisfaction with sacrifice after three months (Time 2), which in turn was linked with greater one's own commitment to the romantic relationship after six months (Time 3; H2.3w). Additionally, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships at the beginning of the study (Time 1) was associated with greater their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice after three months (Time 2), which in turn was linked with greater one's own commitment to the romantic relationship after six months (Time 3; H2.4w). Finally, greater women's sanctification of romantic relationships at the beginning of the study (Time 1) was associated with greater their sacrifice after three months (Time 2), which in turn was linked with greater one's own commitment to the romantic relationships at the beginning of the study (Time 1) was associated with greater their sacrifice after three months (Time 2), which in turn was linked with greater their partner's commitment to the romantic relationships at the beginning of the study (Time 1) was associated with greater their sacrifice after three months (Time 2), which in turn was linked with greater their partner's commitment to the romantic relationship after six months (Time 3; H2.6w).

Beyond satisfaction (intrapersonal dimension), commitment (interpersonal dimension) is crucial to building, forming, and maintaining romantic unions. In the presented study, I defined relationship commitment as "the intent to persist in a relationship, including a long-term orientation toward involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment to it (Rusbult et al., 1998, pp. 359-360)." The confirmed hypotheses in Model 2 showed that women's and men's sanctification of romantic relationships significantly predicted this intent to maintain their romantic unions. In the "here and now" perspective (i.e., cross-sectional approach), women's and men's sanctification of romantic relationships was directly linked with greater their own relationship commitment. These findings align with the results of studies (e.g., Karyadeva, 2020; Mahoney et al., 2023; Zarzycka, Tomaka, et al., 2024). However, in the long term (i.e.,

longitudinal approach), only women's sanctification of romantic relationships significantly predicted their own and their partners' relationship commitment after three and six months. Similarly, as for relationship satisfaction, the way how women perceive their unions turned out to be more significant for relationship quality than men's point of view.

These results are consistent with the findings about the role of social structures, which indicated that the effective fulfillment of gender roles requires women to meet the emotional needs of family members and take responsibility for maintaining relationships (Duncombe & Marsden, 1993; Eagly, 1987; Kwak, 2019). This is also observed in the data from the Centre for Public Opinion Research (PORC, 2018, 2019, 2022b), which indicated that women, compared to men, make more effort to maintain their family, that is, devote more time to the family, taking care of the home, and raising the children. Furthermore, speaking in the language of folk wisdom, there is a Polish saying, "the man is the head of the house, and the woman is the neck that turns this head." This statement illustrates both partners' roles in a romantic union. Although the man is the "head" responsible for the family and making critical decisions, the woman sets the direction in which their relationship goes. Very often, it is her way of looking at the family and her religiosity that will determine the upbringing of the children, the building of good family relationships, and the continuation of the marriage. The results obtained, especially in the long term, show that this statement has empirical support.

Researchers (Pryor & Roberts, 2005; Rhoades et al., 2010) show that cohabitees and married couples similarly understand commitment as a willingness to stay in the relationship, loyalty, and responsibility for the partner and the relationship, even when partners are unhappy. A study by Paprzycka et al. (2020) focusing on Poles' attitudes toward the permanence of marriage and their opinions on justifiable reasons for divorce and staying in an unsatisfying relationship found that children's well-being, love for a partner and belief in the permanence of marriage were one of the most critical factors for remaining in an intimate relationship, even when dissatisfied. The results of my studies are congruent with these findings, indicating that partners' perception of the relationship as sacred (including the belief in the permanence of marriage) could be crucial in protecting and maintaining their romantic unions.

The indirect effects in the cross-sectional approaches confirmed that when women and men perceive their relationship as sacred in a "now and here" perspective (e.g., due to an upcoming wedding anniversary), their own and their partners' relationship commitment increases. These effects occur through their own or their partners' satisfaction with sacrifice. In the longitudinal approach, like relationship satisfaction, the women's sanctification of romantic relationships became even more significant. Their greater sanctification was linked to one's own and their partners' greater relationship commitment. These associations occurred due to their own and their partners' sacrifices.

In these associations, an essential role turned out to sacrifice. In the "now and here" perspective, when spouses perceive their relationship as sacred, they may feel motivated to take care of their romantic partners through sacrificing. This sense that they are behaving in a "caring" way, in turn, will increase their own and their partners' relationship commitment. These results correspond with the findings of other researchers (Ellison et al., 2011; Mahoney et al., 1999; Mahoney et al., 2022), who confirmed that couples who sanctify their relationships have a stronger motivation to protect their romantic unions, invest more time and effort in strengthening them, and present lower factors of divorce risk. In addition, Wieselquist et al. (1999) demonstrated that sacrifice increases trust between partners, fostering commitment and reciprocation of more sacrifice.

In the long term, women's and men's sacrifices also played a significant role. In the context of Rusbult's (1980) investment model, sacrifice can be considered an investment in the relationship. By sacrifice, partners may invest in one's relationship, strengthening feelings of commitment (Van Lange et al., 1997). By sanctifying their romantic relationships, partners may be more likely to behave pro-relationship, e.g., fulfilling household chores, giving up their interests for the family's sake, and spending more time with children. These behaviors, especially if a partner perceives them as acts of sacrifice, may increase their own and their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice and, next, shape commitment to the relationship in the future. Stanley et al. (2006) showed that satisfaction with sacrifice in early marriage is associated with global relationship quality in the long term. These results correspond with the findings of other authors, showing positive associations between sacrifice and relationship commitment (e.g., Monk et al., 2014; Van Lange et al., 1997; Wieselquist et al., 1999).

Sacrifice is also a behavior often driven by the motivation to provide care for the wellbeing and needs of others (Clark & Mills, 2011). This motivation may have origins in the religious meanings that partners give their romantic unions (Park, 2013). About 86.9% of respondents expressed a Roman Catholic confession that strongly emphasizes the permanence and indissolubility of the marriage relationship. Thus, sanctifying romantic relationships can motivate partners to dedicate themselves to each other, make sacrifices for their partner/relationship, and increase efforts to maintain and care for the romantic relationship. Lambert and Dollahite (2008), in their qualitative study on marital commitment in religious couples (Christian, Jewish, and Muslim unions in long-term marriages averaging 20 years), confirmed that religion helped spouses view their relationship as sacred, which, in turn, enhanced and stabilized their commitment to marriage.

My results also align with findings, indicating that, although sacrifice and commitment are related, they are conceptually different (Monk et al., 2014; Whitton et al., 2007; Van Lange et al., 1997). The linkages between sacrifice and commitment are based on the bidirectional nature (Monk et al., 2014) and the mutual growth cycle model (Wieselquist et al., 1999). In the context of the bidirectional nature, on the one hand, sacrifice is considered an investment in the relationship (Rusbult, 1980), which builds commitment (Van Lange et al., 1997). This point of view was confirmed in my studies. On the other hand, sacrifice is analyzed as a consequence of commitment (Monk et al., 2014). When partners are maintained in their relationship, they may be more willing to sacrifice. Some studies support this idea, indicating that commitment is positively related to subsequent sacrifice (e.g., Stanley et al., 2006; Van Lange et al., 1997). In the presented studies, I did not analyze such dependence. It is, therefore, worthwhile for future research to include relationship commitment as a mediator and satisfaction with sacrifice as a dependent variable and to test the indirect effects in the APIMeM model. According to the mutual growth cycle model (Wieselquist et al., 1999), commitment and pro-social behaviors (i.e., sacrifice) establish a mutually enhancing cycle. On the one side, commitment promotes trust by sacrificing for a partner. Conversely, when partners observe each other's sacrifice behaviors, their trust and dependence increase, leading to increased commitment (Wieselquist et al., 1999). These associations were observed in my study, especially in the long-term perspective, when satisfaction with sacrifice was linked with greater their own and their partner's commitment to the relationship.

The findings in my dissertation support Mahoney's (2013) Relational Spirituality Framework. They are congruent in most RSF studies that have found links between sanctification and relationship quality for intimate married and unmarried relationships (Mahoney et al., 2023). However, my results enhance existing knowledge by showing the mechanisms of these connections (mediating role of satisfaction with sacrifice), including the perspective of both partners and, what seems the most important, presents how the sanctification of a romantic relationship allows to predict its quality in "here and now" and in the long-term perspectives. Interestingly, sanctification was a stronger predictor of relationship commitment than satisfaction. This suggests that partners' perception of romantic unions as sacred is more likely to motivate them to protect and make efforts to maintain the relationship than make them satisfied and happy. Moreover, my results confirmed that sanctification, expressed as the second mechanism in RSF, is an essential factor supporting relationship quality also for Polish couples.

Finally, several direct and indirect hypotheses (effects) tested in APIM and APIMeM models in cross-sectional and longitudinal approaches were confirmed. In both Models (1 and 2), there were some of the effects, for example, Sanctification of $RR_{W,T1} \rightarrow SWS_{W,T1} \rightarrow RR$ Satisfaction_{W T1} (H1.3_W), which were observed in each time point (i.e., Times 1, 2, and 3) even when the sample size was decreased (see Tables 15, 19, 23, and 27). This suggests these effects were strong, stable, and resistant to sample decline. Moreover, they give us a lot of information about the role of sanctification in predicting the quality of a romantic union. However, there were also many insignificant hypotheses (effects) that were insignificant at the beginning or showed null results at Times 2 and/or 3. For instance, the hypothesis (H1.5_W) Sanctification of RR W T1 \rightarrow SWS_{W T1} \rightarrow RR Satisfaction_{M T1} was only confirmed in Time 1 when the sample was the most diverse regarding variables describing the relationship. There are some reasons why the other hypotheses (effect) were insignificant or showed null results at the next time points. First, due to a high attrition rate between the first and second (53.55%) and second and third assessments (39.03%), the sample was not the same when conducting analyses. Second, the test's power declined as the sample size decreased (see paragraph 3.1 Participants). In the end, as Kenny et al. (2020) and Coutts et al. (2019) pointed out, obtaining significant direct and indirect, especially partner, effects in APIM and APIMeM is difficult and requires an appropriate sample size. For this reason, to be more confident that the hypotheses (effects) tested were "truly null," it is worthwhile in future studies to take care of a sufficiently larger sample size with a low retention rate (Ledermann et al., 2022) and conduct additional complex statistical analyses such as Bayesian estimation and Bayesian hypothesis testing (Harms & Lakens, 2018; Lakens et al., 2018).

In summary, the sanctification of a romantic relationship turned out to be an essential predictor of its quality. The confirmed hypotheses in Models 1 and 2 showed that partners' perception of romantic unions as sacred directly increased their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction and commitment. In addition, indirect analyses discovered that sacrifice is a significant mediator, allowing a better understanding and explanation of these associations. Considering women's and men's cross-sectional and longitudinal perspectives, the obtained results gave a detailed and more complex view of the role of sanctification in the Polish socio-cultural context.

5.5 Sociodemographic Differences Results

In the last step of the analysis, the differences between the studied variables (sanctification of the romantic relationship, romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment, and satisfaction with sacrifice) were calculated in eight sociodemographic groups (age, education, professional situation, income, religiosity, residence, kind of relationships, family size, and relationship duration).

The most exciting results showed that those aged 35-54 sanctified their relationship more strongly than those aged 18-34 and 55+. More strongly sanctified their relationship those who described themselves as deeply religious than those described as religious, indifferent, weakly religious, and non-religious; those who lived in a village than those living in a city over 50,001 citizenships; those who were married than those cohabiting and fiancé; those who have three and more children than those having two children, one child, and no having children, and those who were together longer (for 11+) than those being together for 3-10 years.

More satisfied and committed to their relationship were participants aged 18-34 than those aged 35-54 and aged 55+; those who have income above 4 001 PLN/month than those who have income between 2 001 – 4 000 PLN/month; those who described themselves as deeply religious than those described as non-religious; those who were married and fiancé than those cohabiting; those who have two children, three or more children, no having children than those who have one child; and those who were in the romantic relationship for 11-20 years than those being together for 3-10 years. Lastly, more satisfied with sacrifice were participants aged 18-34 than those aged 55+; people who described themselves as deeply religious than those cohabiting.

These findings align with results showing positive associations between religiousness/spirituality, especially the sanctification of romantic relationships, and relationship quality (Lakatos & Martos, 2019; Mahoney et al., 2023; Mahoney et al., 2021). The greater the participants' religiousness, the higher the sanctification, sacrifice, satisfaction, and commitment level. In addition, an individual with higher levels of religiousness perceives their relationships as more sacred. This result is in line with studies conducted by Śmiałek (2024) and Doehring et al. (2009), who showed that the strongest predictor of sanctification of romantic relationships is religiousness (measured as Alport's intrinsic religiosity). Researchers also indicated that heterosexual (e.g., Mahoney et al., 1999), homosexual (e.g., Phillips et al., 2017) relationships, as well as cohabiting couples (Henderson et al., 2018) often sanctify their romantic unions. These results were confirmed in my study. However, the level of sanctification was different due to the kind of relationship - the strongest sanctification of romantic relationships was by married partners. Similarly, married participants indicated higher satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice levels than those who were fiancé or cohabiting. Researchers, for example, indicated that married couples seem more satisfied with their relationship than unmarried cohabiters or re-parented couples (Jose et al., 2010; Reynolds et al., 2014).

Interestingly, more satisfied and committed to their relationship were participants aged 18-34 than those aged 35-54 and 55+. These findings do not seem surprising considering Bühler et al.'s (2021) systematic review and meta-analysis results. As they noticed, relationship satisfaction is the highest in the first month/years of the unions and then declined from 20 to 40, reaching its lowest point at age 40. Additionally, partners being together for 11-20 years compared to those being together for 3-10 years presented a higher level of relationship satisfaction and commitment. This finding aligns with the study of Bühler et al. (2021) and Sternberg's (1986) theory of love, which highlighted that relationship duration has an important influence on relationship quality.

It is also worth pointing out that the number of offspring differentiates satisfaction and commitment to the relationship. Having one child does not guarantee a higher level of satisfaction and commitment. As my results and Margolis and Myrskylä (2011) show, it is much more satisfying to have two or more than one child when partners decide to have offspring.

To sum up, no studies have been done to date, especially in Polish psychological research, showing how different demographic variables can determine the perceived quality of a relationship. The above results indicated that various sociodemographic characteristics, such as age, religiosity, and kind of relationship, influence partners' perceptions of sanctification, sacrifice, satisfaction, and commitment in romantic unions. These findings shed new light on the role of sanctification and allow researchers to set new research questions and hypotheses. Furthermore, authors in future studies should, for instance, consider participants' religiousness and the kind of relationships from which the partners come.

5.6 Limitations

The results of this study should be considered in light of several limitations. First, the present research includes only the second stage (i.e., maintenance) and second mechanism (i.e., sanctification) of Mahoney's (2013) Relational Spirituality Framework. The analyses were conducted on the total sample of couples who had been together for at least three years and came from various types of romantic unions: marriage, cohabitation, and fiancés. As sociodemographic calculations showed, couples from different romantic relationships perceived their unions as sacred, but their level of sanctification was varied. In the presented research, I did not analyze the APIM and APIMeM models in a separate group of couples (e.g., marriage and cohabitation) due to insufficient sample size to obtain significant effects with the expected power at .90, especially in the longitudinal approach.

Second, I noted a high attrition rate between the first and second (53.55%) and second and third assessments (39.03%). Research, including APIM and APIMeM models, requires data from

both partners. Conducting such studies is very difficult because both partners must be highly motivated to participate in the research and complete questionnaires three times (in a longitudinal approach). I used some motivators, such as the possibility of winning cash awards after participating in each stage of the study, preparing a special website describing my project, and sending emails with grating for participation, but these turned out to be insufficient. Perhaps a better solution would be to give a little cash award or a small gift (e.g., a cup) at each time point for each respondent for participation in the study, as some researchers (e.g., Cao et al., 2016; He et al., 2018) did. However, such an attempt is costly and requires special funding, which I did not obtain for my study. In addition, the high rate of couples' dropout might have been caused by the length of the online questionnaire (approximately 10–20 min) and its need to be completed three times. Furthermore, the time interval (three months) may have been too long, or the emails inviting participation in the second and third stages of the study may not have been convincing enough. Because of that, a high attrition rate could be a cause, provided that some hypotheses might not be confirmed in APIM and APIMeM models in Times 2 and 3 in the cross-sectional approach due to insufficient sample size and decreasing test power.

Third, couples for my study were recruited chiefly via social media like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram and completed self-reported questionnaires online. Such an approach is characterized by a lack of circumstances that would increase participants' willingness to remain in the study, which could be present in face-to-face research (e.g., obedience to authority and conformity norms; Hoerger, 2010). Including self-reported measures that participants completed three times can provide a common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Razmus & Mielniczuk, 2018). Generally, common method bias may occur when independent and dependent variables are measured within one survey using the same response technique (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Kock et al., 2021). Respondents, for example, may answer unreliably because they want to be perceived as rational and constant in their answers or are guided by implicit theories about the links between variables (Razmus & Mielniczuk, 2018). Many researchers (e.g., Burton-Jones, 2009; Kock et al., 2021; Podsakoff et al., 2012) agree that common method bias can significantly impact the empirical results, e.g., affect the parameter estimates of the hypothesized associations among constructs, such as the correlation, and thus, derived conclusions of a study. Several techniques allow us to reduce and overcome a common method bias (Kock et al., 2021; Razmus & Mielniczuk, 2018). In my study, I used a well-thought-out order of questionnaires, with clear instructions for respondents (such as communicating that there are no correct answers and that all responses will be kept anonymous) and scales with negatively worded items. I also included the temporal technique by measuring the tested variables in three three-month intervals. Moreover, in

the Confirmatory Factor Analyses, I checked to fit the model to the data of each measure used. Nevertheless, considering, for instance, the very high correlation indicators between the studied variables, the obtained results in the presented dissertation may be somewhat influenced by common method bias. One of the best solutions to avoiding this problem is to measure the independent variable from one source (such as a respondent) and the dependent variable from another or secondary data (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015; Kock et al., 2021). In future studies, this issue should be considered.

Fourth, many tested hypotheses (effects) were insignificant and showed null effects. This was most likely due to a decline in the test's power as the sample size decreased (see paragraph 3.1 Participants), and as Kenny et al. (2020) and Coutts et al. (2019) pointed out, difficulties in obtaining significant direct and indirect, especially partner, effects in APIM and APIMeM. According to Harms and Lakens (2018) and Lakens et al. (2018), researchers might want to know if a null hypothesis is true and therefore be interested in "proving the null." They can use, for example, equivalence testing, Bayesian estimation (i.e., the ROPE procedure), and Bayesian hypothesis testing (i.e., Bayes factors; Harms & Lakens, 2018; Lakens et al., 2018). I did not make such calculations because of the high complexity of such analyses, especially in the APIM and APIMeM models. However, it is worth conducting these analyzes in future research to obtain a stronger conviction that the observed effects were null.

Finally, the study participants decelerated nearly all Roman Catholics (86.9% of women and 88.9% of men). There was also a disproportion in numbers between married, cohabiting, and fiancés couples (in Time 1, for example, 50.4%, 30.6%, and 19.0%, respectively). These studies did not include homosexual couples, which, as Philips et al. (2017) showed, may also perceive their romantic unions as sacred. In addition, most participants have high education (64.0% of women and 60.7% of men) and live in cities (77.5%). Therefore, the findings of the presented research should not be generalized to Polish couples.

5.7 Future Research Directions

Considering the presented results and their limitations, it is worth pointing out several directions for future research. Firstly, it is very interesting to extend the study by including the first (discovery) and the last (transformation) stages of developing romantic relationships described in Mahoney's (2013) Relational Spirituality Framework. We might suppose that the partners' perception of romantic unios as sacred will also support them in the early stage of the relationship, e.g., leading to marriage. Moreover, when a crisis arrives, it will motivate them to protect their romantic relationship.

Secondly, future research should consider sociodemographic differences and test the APIM and APIMeM models separately in married, cohabiting, and fiancées groups. Considering the linkages between the sanctification of romantic relationships and religiousness and the teaching of the Catholic Church, which does not condone cohabitation before marriage as consistent with God's will, religious doctrine, or the sanctity of intimate, sexual unions outside of marriage, it is worth including both types of sanctification (theistic and non-theistic) separately in the analysis.

Thirdly, analyzing the direct and indirect actor and partner effects in the longitudinal approach, it is worth expanding the tested APIM and APIMeM models by controlling levels of relationship outcome variables (satisfaction and commitment) at Time 1 when analyses test whether the sanctification of romantic relationships at Time 1 will predict satisfaction or commitment at Times 2 and 3. Interesting elements could also be added to these calculations and control for a range of demographic variables (e.g., age, relationship duration) that correlate with relationship satisfaction or commitment. Although such models will be more complicated and require an appropriately high sample size, they could provide more complex information about the role of sanctification of romantic relationships in predicting the quality of romantic unions' lives.

Fourthly, according to the results of Monk et al.'s (2014) study, the authors in the following studies may test the role of relationship commitment in predicting various types of sacrifice (e.g., behavioral sacrifice). These results could support and shed new light on the bidirectional nature (Monk et al., 2014) and the mutual growth cycle model (Wieselquist et al., 1999) of associations between commitment and sacrifice.

Lastly, it is also interesting to test the role of sanctification in the context of Rusbult's (1980) investment model. Considering the sanctification of romantic relationships as an independent variable, satisfaction, investment, and alternatives as mediators, and commitment and sacrifice as dependent variables could give us very interesting results, mainly if the studies are conducted using a longitudinal approach and both partners' perspectives. To my knowledge, no such studies have been conducted to date.

5.8 Practical Implications

The presented research has shown that women's and men's perception of romantic relationships as sacred is linked with greater their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction and commitment. These associations are observed in the "here and now" and in the long-term perspective, meaning that how partners think about their romantic union will predict their satisfaction and commitment present and in the future, that is, after three and six months. In addition, one's own satisfaction with sacrifice, as well as the ability to notice the acts of partner's

sacrifice, especially men, plays a crucial role in the quality of the relationship. These findings are important in clinical family practice and family counseling. Social scientists, religious leaders, couple and family educators, or psychotherapists could use these results to help clients identify specific religious/spiritual beliefs about close relationships, especially the perception of romantic unions as sacred, that could help motivate them to sacrifice for family/partner and use of interpersonal strategies for enhancing their relational and personal well-being. In addition, these results may help professionals understand better and be more sensitive to how their clients perceive, think, speak, and behave in their relationships. Finally, the results showed that the process of sanctification of romantic relationships is relevant not only to individuals embedded in "traditional" religious couples. Unmarried cohabiting people also perceive their romantic unions as sacred, but it may occur in a more non-theistic way. Because of this, professionals should not exclude sanctification as a specific religious/spiritual process that can also help them strengthen and maintain healthy relationships with loved ones.

5.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, the psycho-spiritual process of sanctification of a relationship is a crucial factor in increasing relationship quality among Polish heterosexual couples. Women's and men's perceptions of their romantic unions as sacred provide to greater their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction and commitment in the "here and now" and long-term perspective. Furthermore, sacrifice allows us to understand these associations better, indicating that men's sacrifice, especially in the long-term approach, is a more significant predictor of greater satisfaction and engagement in the relationship for their own and their partners. A man's devotion to a relationship depends significantly on how a woman perceives the relationship, whether or not she sees something special and sacred in it.

Summary

Humans are social and have formed relationships with others for centuries, such as neighborhoods, families, or romantic unions. How these relationships are created, sustained, and transformed depends on various factors, e.g., political, social, economic, or religious influences. Mahoney (2013), in the Relational Spirituality Framework, presented how religious/spiritual variables can be linked to various romantic relationship outcomes. The RFS is based on a well-established and comprehensive theory asserting that religion and spirituality are multidimensional constructs and multilevel phenomena comprising numerous thoughts, feelings, actions, experiences, relationships, and psychological responses (Pargament et al., 2013). In the RSF, Mahoney (2013) delineates three recursive stages in the development of romantic relationships: discovery, maintaining, and transforming, and three levels of mechanisms operating in these stages: individual relationships with the divine/God, perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, and family members' relationships with the religious/spiritual community.

The presented study was based on the second stage of developing romantic relationships, i.e., the maintenance stage, and considered the second mechanism, i.e., the perception of the romantic relationship as sacred, which is related to the process of sanctification of the romantic relationship (Mahoney, 2013). The research had four aims. First, it examined the associations between the sanctification of the romantic relationship and its quality in a sample of Polish couples. Second, it analyzed the potential mechanism of these associations and included satisfaction with sacrifice as a possible mediator. Third, the linkages (direct and indirect) between the sanctification of a romantic relationship (independent variable), romantic relationship satisfaction and commitment (dependent variables), and satisfaction with sacrifice (mediator), including dyadic data (i.e., from women and men) of Polish couples were tested in the Actor–Partner Interdependence Model (Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011) and in the Actor–Partner Interdependence Extended Mediation Model (Coutts et al., 2019; Hayes, 2022; Lederman et al., 2011). Fourth, it showed how different sociodemographics were related to the perception by partners of sanctification, satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice in their romantic relationships.

The obtained findings indicated that the sanctification of a romantic relationship turned out to be an essential predictor of its quality. The confirmed hypotheses showed that partners' perception of romantic unions as sacred directly increased their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction and commitment. In addition, indirect analyses discovered that sacrifice is a significant mediator, allowing a better understanding and explanation of these associations. For example, by sanctifying romantic relationships, partners may be more likely to behave prorelationship, e.g., fulfilling household chores, giving up their interests for the family's sake, and spending more time with children. These behaviors, especially if a partner perceives them as acts of sacrifice, may increase their own and their partner's satisfaction with sacrifice and, next, commitment to the relationship in the future.

The results also showed that various sociodemographic characteristics, such as age, religiosity, and kind of relationship, influenced partners' perceptions of sanctification, sacrifice, satisfaction, and commitment in romantic unions. For instance, the greater the participants' religiousness, the higher the sanctification, sacrifice, satisfaction, and commitment level. In addition, married participants indicated higher levels of satisfaction, commitment, and sacrifice than those fiancé or cohabiting.

Finally, the presented research sheds new light on the role of sanctification and allows researchers to set new research questions and hypotheses. The findings could also be important in clinical family practice and family counseling by supporting professionals in better understanding and being more sensitive to how their clients perceive, think, speak, and behave in their relationships. This study has several limitations, such as a high attrition rate between measurements, that should be considered in interpreting the results.

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Appendices

Appendix A.

The leaflet with information and an invitation to my study.



Appendix B.

Demographics questionnaire

ILOVE
Zestaw Badawczy #1
Witam Cię bardzo serdecznie! Na samym początku chciałbym Ci już serdecznie podziękować, że wyraziłeś/aś chęć pomocy w moich badaniach.
Poproszę Cię najpierw o odpowiednie zakodowanie swoich odpowiedzi. Stworzony KOD pozwoli mi "sparować" Cię z Twoim partnerem/małżonkiem. Tym sposobem będę wiedział, że jesteście parą oraz że oboje wypełniliście zestaw badawczy.
kamil.tomaka1@gmail.com Przełącz konto
* Wskazuje wymagane pytanie
Podaj swoje IMIĘ: * Twoja odpowiedź
Podaj IMIĘ Twojego partnera/małżonka: * Twoja odpowiedź
W poniższym polu SUMA DNI URODZIN - wpisz sumę z dni Waszych urodzin, np. Twoje urodziny przypadają na 13 maja, a Twojego partnera/małżonka na 19 grudnia, zatem 13+19 = 32. Wpisz więc liczbę 32.
SUMA DNI URODZIN: *
Twoja odpowiedź
Dalej Strona 1 z 11 Wyczyść formularz
niguy nie pouwaj w romularzach Google swoich naser. Ta treść nie została utworzona ani zatwierdzona przez Google. <u>Zgłoś nadużycie - Warunki korzystania z usługi</u> - Ochrona danych osobowych
Formularze Google

Appendix B.

Demographics questionnaire (cont.)

	Jak oceniasz swój status materialny? • Wybierz •
	Jaki jest Twój miesięczny dochód na osobę w związku/rodzinie? *
Kilka informacji o Tobie	injunia -
Na początku proszę, abyś podal/la kilka informacji o sobie. Pozyskane dane będą interpretowane w sposób ogólny i posłużą jedynie do całościowych analiz statystycznych. Proszę zatem o szczere odpowiedzi ()	Jakie jest Twoje wyznanie religijne? *
	C Raymisconatoricore
Rok urodzenia: *	Greckokatolickie
Twoja odpowiedž	Prawosławne
	O Protestanckie
Pled: *	O Zielonoświątkowe
	Starokatolickie
O Materia	Swiadek Jehowy
)	O Muzłumanin
	○ Inne:
Miejsce zamieszkania: *	
Wybierz +	Jaki jest Twój stosunek do religii? *
	Bardzo religijny
Wyksztalcenie: *	O Religiny
No. Advances and the second se	Obojętny religijnie
Most .	 Slabo religijny
	O Niereligijny
Sytuacja zawodowa: *	O Agnostyk
Weblarz	O Ateista
admost .	O inne:
	Czy aktualnie przynależysz do jakiejś wspólnoty religijnej (np. Domowy Kościół, * Ruch Światło Życie, Caritas)?
	O Tak
	O Nie
	Jeśli odpowiedziałeś/aś TAK, to proszę wpisz jaka to wspólnota:
	Twoja odpowiedž
	Wittecz Dalej Strona 2 z 11 Wyczyść formularz

Appendix B.

Demographics questionnaire (cont.)

Kilka informacji o Twoim związka	Czy byłeś/aś wcześniej w związku cywilnym lub cywilno-kościelnym? * O Tak O Nie
Proszę abyli teraz podal/la kilka informacji na temat Twojego aktualnego związku. Może się zdarzyć, że niektóre pytania nie będą charakteryzowały Twojej relacji. Jeżeli tak się stanie, to nie udzielaj na nie odpowiedzi i pozostaw je puste.	Jak długo znasz się ze swoim partnerem? (odpowiedź podaj w latach). * Twoja odpowiedź
heteroseksualnym (dwie osoby przeciwnej pici) homoseksualnym (dwie osoby tej samej pici)	Jak długo jesteś ze swoim obecnym partnerem w związku? (odpowiedź podaj w * latach). Twoje odpowiedź
Jaki jest rodzaj Twojego związku? * Cywiny Cywino-kościelny Niesformalizowany (mieszkamy wspólnie)	Jeżeli jesteś w związku cywilnym lub cywilno-kościelnym, to jaki jest staż Waszego małżeństwa? (odpowiedź podaj w latach) Twoja odpowiedź
Nestormatizowany (ne mieszkarny wspólnie) Narzeczeński (mieszkarny wspólnie) Narzeczeński (nie mieszkarny wspólnie) inne:	Czy posiadasz potomstwo ze swojego obeonego związku?* Tak Nie Spodziewamy się dziecka
Jeśli pozostajesz w związku niesformalizowanym lub narzeczeńskim, to czy planujesz jego sformalizowanie? Tak, tak szybko jak to tylko możliwe Tak, ale jeszcze nie teraz Zastanawiam się nad tym	Jeżeli zaznaczyłeś/aś na powyższe pytanie odpowiedź TAK, to proszę podaj liczbę potomstwa oraz ich wiek - w latach. Przykład odpowiedzi: 3 dzieci, 10, 12, 14 lat. Twoja odpowiedź
Raczej nie Zdecydowanie nie	Czy posiadasz potomstwo ze swojego byłego związku?* O Tak O Nie
Czy rwoj aktualny związek jest? * O pierwszy O kolejny	Jeżeli zaznaczyłeś/aś na powyższe pytanie odpowiedź TAK, to proszę podaj liczbę potomstwa oraz ich wiek - w latach. Przykład odpowiedzi: 3 dzieci, 10, 12, 14 lat. Twoja odpowiedzi
	Wohecz Delej Strong 3 z 11 Wyczyść formularz

Appendix C.

Sanctification of Romantic Relationship/Marriage Scale

9. Są chwile, w których czuję silną więź z Bogiem w moim

10. W tajemniczy sposób Bóg dotyka mojego związku/małżeństwa.

związku/małżeństwie.

SOM

A. Mahoney et al. (2009) Polish version R. P. Bartczuk, v. 20190911

Ludzie przypisują duże znaczenie niektórym obszarom swojego życia, a nawet uważają je za święte. Tak może być również w przypadku związku i małżeństwa. Chciałbym Cię teraz spytać, jak Ty postrzegasz swój związek.

Zwróć uwagę, że w niektórych z zdaniach użyto słowo "Bóg". Różni ludzie używają różnych pojęć na określenie Boga, takich jak "Siła Wyższa", "Boski Duch", "Siła Duchowa", "Duch Święty", "Jahwe", "Allach", "Budda", "Absolut", "Bóstwo", "Energia Duchowa" czy "Bogini". Odpowiadając na poniższe pytania, podstaw swoje własne pojęcie w miejsce "Boga". Ponadto, niektórzy ludzie nie wierzą w Boga. Jeśli jest to Twój przypadek, wybierz odpowiedź "zdecydowanie nie zgadzam się" tam, gdzie jest to właściwe.

Proszę wskazać w jakim stopniu zgadzasz się lub nie zgadzasz z każdym z poniższych stwierdzeń.

Zdecydowanie nie zgadzam się	Nie zgadzam się	Raczej nie zgadzam się	Ani się zgadzam, ani nie zgadzam	Raczej zgadzam się		Zgadzam się		Zdecydowani zgadzam się																				
1	2	3	4	5		6		6		6		6		6		6		6		6		6		6			7	
1. Bóg odegrał rolę w tym, jak to się stało, że się poznaliśmy/pobraliśmy z moim partnerem/współmałżonkiem.						2	3	4	5	6	7																	
2. Czuję obecność Boga w relacji z moim partnerem/współmałżonkiem.						2	3	4	5	6	7																	
3. Mój związek	/małżeństwo od	zwierciedla wol	lę Bożą.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7																	
4. Doświadczam Boga przez swój związek/małżeństwo.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7																	
5. Czuję, że Bóg działa w moim związku/małżeństwie.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7																	
6. Bóg prowadzi mój związek/małżeństwo.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7																	
7. W moim związku/małżeństwie dostrzegam dzieło Boga.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7																	
8. Bóg żyje w mojm związku/małżeństwie.						2	3	4	5	6	7																	

1

1

2

2

3

3

5

5

6

6

4

4

7

7

Proszę wskazać w jakim stopniu zgadzasz się lub nie zgadzasz z każdym z poniższych stwierdzeń.

1. Mój związek/małżeństwo jest święte.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Bycie z moim partnerem/współmałżonkiem jest głębokim doświadczeniem duchowym			3	4	5	6	7
3. Ten związek/To małżeństwo jest częścią większego planu duchowego.				4	5	6	7
4. Kiedy jestem z moim partnerem/współmałżonkiem, są chwile, kiedy czas stoi w miejscu i czuję, że jestem częścią czegoś wiecznego.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Mój związek/małżeństwo jest dla mnie uświęcone.			3	4	5	6	7
6. Mój związek/małżeństwo łączy mojego partnera/małżonka i mnie z czymś wiekszym, niż my sami.		2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Mój związek/małżeństwo ujawnia mi najgłębsze prawdy życia.		2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Mój związek/małżeństwo wydaje mi się cudem.		2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Mój związek/małżeństwo zbliża mnie do najgłębszych tajemnic życia.		2	3	4	5	6	7
10. W niektórych momentach mój związek/małżeństwo uświadamia mi siłę stwórczą, która wykracza poza nas.		2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix D.

Relationship Assessment Scale

RAS-PL

Hendrick (1988) Polish adaptation by Adamczyk et al. (2022)

Partnerzy/małżonkowie czasami różnie charakteryzują swój związek. Myśląc o swojej relacji, proszę udziel odpowiedzi na kilka poniższych pytań.

1. Jak bardzo Twój partner/partnerka odpowiada Twoim potrzebom?

	1	2	3	4	5							
	Słabo		Przeciętnie		Nadzwyczaj							
2.	Ogólnie rzecz biorąc, jak ba	rdzo jesteś	zadowolony	/a ze sw	ojego związku?							
	1	2	3	4	5							
	Niezadowolony/a	Prz	eciętnie		Niezmiernie zadowolony							
3.	3. Jak udana jest Twoja relacja w porównaniu z większością relacji?											
	1	2	3	4	5							
	Słaba		Przeciętna		Doskonała							
4.	Jak często zdarza Ci się myś	leć, że lepi	ej byłoby nie	e wchod	zić w ten związek?							
	1	2	3	4	5							
	Nigdy	Ι	Przeciętnie		Bardzo często							
5.	W jakim stopniu ten związel	c spełnił Tv	voje pierwot	ne oczel	kiwania?							
	1	2	3	4	5							
	Prawie w ogóle		Przeciętnie		Całkowicie							
6.	Jak bardzo kochasz swojego	partnera/p	artnerkę?									
	1	2	3	4	5							
	Niezbyt		Przeciętnie		Bardzo mocno							
7.	Jak dużo problemów istnieje	e w waszyn	n związku?									
	1	2	3	4	5							
	Bardzo mało		Przeciętnie		Bardzo dużo							

Appendix E.

Commitment Level Subscale

СОМ

Lehmiller & Agnew (2006) Polish version by Lachowska et al. (2021)

Partnerzy/małżonkowie czasami różnie spostrzegają swoją związek i oceniają swoje zachowanie w nim. Myśląc o swojej relacji, proszę o określenie w jakim stopniu podane stwierdzenia pasują do opisu Twojego związku. W tym celu proszę użyj poniższej skali:

Całkowicie nie zgadzam się	Zdecydowanie nie zgadzam się	Nie zgadzam się	Raczej zgadzam się	Ani się zgadzam, ani nie zgadzam	Raczej zgadzam się	Zgadzam się	Zdecydowanie zgadzam się	Całkowicie zgadzam się
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

1. Jestem bardzo zaangażowany/a w utrzymanie mojego		c	2	1	5	6	7	8	0
związku z moją partnerką/moim partnerem.	1	2	3	4	5	0	/	0	9
2. Czuję się silnie przywiązany do naszego związku – jestem bardzo przywiązany/a do mojej partnerki/ mojego partnera.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3. Chciałabym/chciałbym, żeby nasz związek trwał wiecznie.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4. Jestem nastawiony/a na to, że nasz związek będzie miał daleką przyszłość (np. wyobrażam sobie, że będę z moją partnerką/moim partnerem przez wiele lat).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Appendix F.

Satisfaction with Sacrifice Scale

SWS

Stanley & Markman (1992) Polish version by Zarzycka et al. (2020)

W każdym związku/małżeństwie pojawiają się chwile, podczas których jeden z partnerów musi zrezygnować z czegoś dla dobra swojego partnera lub związku. Takie sytuacje zdarzały się prawdopodobnie również w Twoim związku. Pomyśl teraz o nich i zaznacz jakim stopniu zgadzasz się lub nie zgadzasz z każdym z poniższych stwierdzeń.

Zdecydowanie nie zgadzam się	Nie zgadzam	Raczej nie zgadzam się	Ani się zgadzam, ani nie zgadzam	Raczej zgadzam się	Zgadzam się	Zdecydowanie zgadzam się
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. Nie odczuwam satysfakcji, kiedy poświęcam się dla mojego	1	2	3	Δ	5	6	7
partnera/mojej partnerki.	1	2	5	т	5	0	/
2. Zrezygnowanie z czegoś dla mojego partnera/mojej partnerki	1	2	3	1	5	6	7
może być satysfakcjonujące.	1	2	5	7	5	0	/
3. Nie jestem osobą, której sprawia przyjemność rezygnowanie	1	r	2	Λ	5	6	7
z własnych zainteresowań, dla mojej relacji z partnerem/partnerką.		2	3	4	5	0	/
4. Mam satysfakcję ze zrobienia czegoś dla mojego partnera/mojej	1	r	2	1	5	6	7
partnerki, nawet jeśli stracę coś, na czym mi zależy.	1	2	3	4	5	0	/
5. Rezygnowanie z czegoś dla mojego partnera/mojej partnerki,	1	r	2	1	5	6	7
często nie jest warte zachodu.	1	2	5	4	5	0	/
6. Czuję się dobrze, gdy mogę poświęcić się dla mojego	1	2	2	4	5	6	7
partnera/mojej partnerki.	1	Ζ	3	4	3	0	/